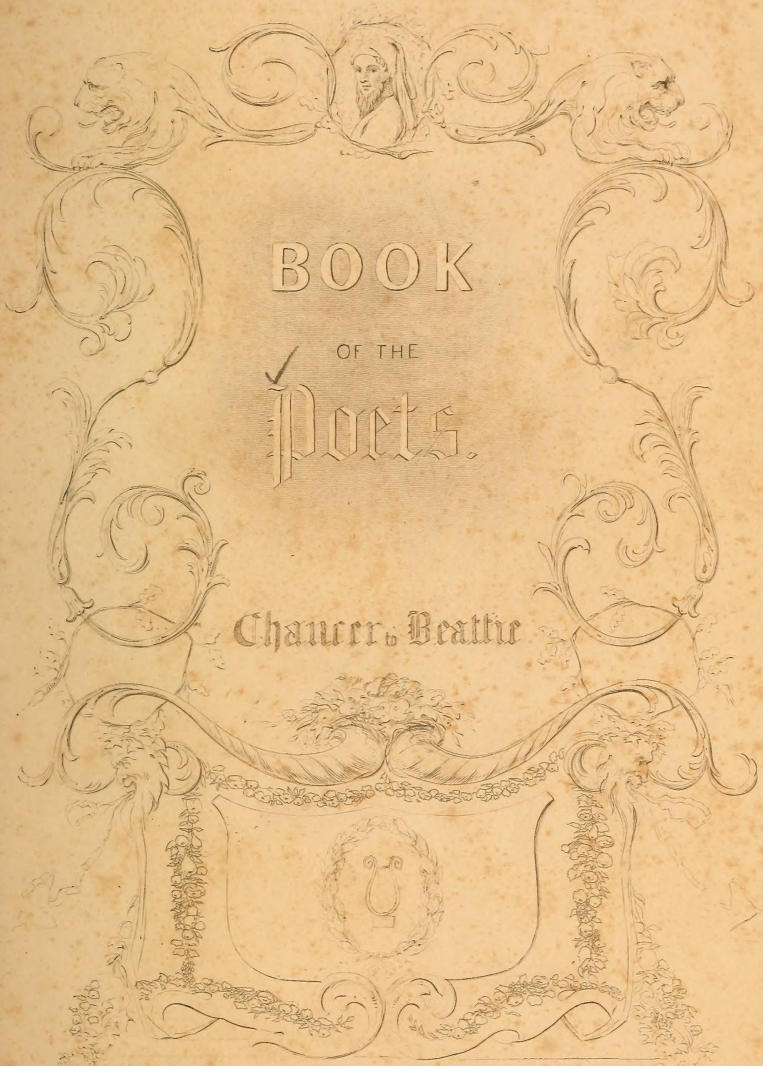


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ESSAY

ON

ENGLISH POETRY,

FROM ITS COMMENCEMENT

UNTIL THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

A FREQUENT error among the lovers of abstract intellect has been, to undervalue the power of language as an auxiliary to thought. With them, it is enough if an idea is expressed in as many words as will serve to make it intelligible: all beyond this they account a mere labour of supererogation. But with as much justice they might despise the diversity of hues, the beauty of forms, and the melody of sounds, with which the beneficent Creator has adorned this material world, and made it a habitation in which man can be happy, because these are not essential to the mere sustenance of man. It is in the intellectual, as in the physical world. An abstract idea, to be productive of practical results in society, must be rendered not merely intelligible, but attractive. An argument, for the purposes of conviction, must be not only conclusive in itself, but invested with those persuasive qualities which will secure its entrance into the hearts of those who are addressed. Man is a poetical as well as a philosophical being, and while his intellect requires sustenance, his imagination craves for enjoyment. For this, something analagous to the material world is necessary—something by which the mere prose of reality is beautified, and aggrandised with form, and light, and melody. On account of the human mind being so constituted, language is

not merely the outline, but the body of thought—the bones, and muscles, and flesh, and blood, through which a phantom-like idea becomes a living tangible reality.

To this poetical tendency, which so essentially constitutes a great portion of our nature, we must refer that amplitude of language by which the vocabulary of every country is distinguished. Even the rudest savage would not be contented with those few words that suffice to express his simple wants, or to indicate the external objects around him. He would not announce an important fact to his mistress, by the abrupt declaration "I love you;" nor panegyrise a deceased warrior by merely summing up, upon his fingers, the number of scalps of which he had become the owner. His kindled imagination struggles to aggrandize either circumstance; his language rises, and expands with the theme; and what might have been originally expressed in the naked form of a mathematical proposition, and in a single sentence, becomes an harangue, or a poem. Such is also the case with society, as it continues to progress from the savage to the civilized state of life. In every stage it is felt that conversation, and speech in general, must consist of something more than the announcement of simple facts or propositions; and thus the routine of social every-day life is impressed with the spirit of poetry. But even this is not enough. There must be men set apart and consecrated for the wants of the imagination, as well as those of intellect and faith; and the poet therefore becomes as indispensable an appendage of constituted society, as the teacher or the priest. And amidst this natural and universal craving, the language of every country is rendered more or less fit for the purposes of poetry. Words are multiplied to express the same object; the principles of verbal inflection are increased, to indicate the states and relations of objects; rhythms are invented, by which to give utterance to every variety of emotion; and arbitrary laws of connexion are established, between the sound of the language and the idea of which it is the utterance.

When the savage, or natural, has thus merged into the artificial state of poetry, the adaptation of language for poetical purposes will depend upon the intellectual character of the community, the situation in which it has been placed, and the

circumstances of its national history. When these are of a favourable description, the few hundreds of words of which a language originally consisted, are expanded, in the course of ages, like a mighty forest that has grown from a handful of seedlings. Such was the case with the language of Greece—that voice of poetry itself—that music of the heart, whose tones will continue to reverberate upon human sympathy as long as an ear exists to hear, or a soul to be moved with the feelings of a human intelligence. At first it was only the rude gabble of the savage who scaled the steep sides of Œta, or chased the flying deer upon the plains of Marathon. But successive families of more civilized beings settled in that beautiful land, and introduced new ideas, with a correspondent nomenclature; and as the Grecian savage rose into the creature of civilization, his language became expressive of something more than the mere wants and feelings of the passing hour. The bright and gentle atmosphere, and the beautiful scenery of Attica, made the Athenian from the first a poet: the glorious history of his people furnished him with the noblest of poetical themes; and therefore the language of Grecian poetry, in the various attributes of strength, expressiveness, and melody—of copiousness to indicate every minute shade of thought, or terseness to condense a distinct proposition—remains, and perhaps will for ever remain, without a rival among the national modifications of human speech. In the same manner the Latin tongue was enabled to assume the second rank among poetical languages. As Rome gradually rose from a village of thatched huts into a city of towers and palaces, and absorbed kingdom after kingdom in the list of her conquests, her tributary subjects added not only to her wealth and power, but also to her vocabulary; and when she sang the song of liberty which Greece had taught her, it was in that language of strength and majesty with which she issued her commands over half the world.

The language of modern poetry, which occupies a similar rank in the present day to that of the Greek and Latin in ancient times, is unquestionably the English—the language of Shakspeare and Milton. It combines, in an admirable degree, the harmony and flexibility of the Greek, with the strength and majesty of the Roman tongue, and has thus been made the

happy vehicle of every poetical mood, whether grave or gay, whether amatory or warlike. This combination of opposite qualities is analogous to the mixture of different races which constitutes the British nation. And we shall find that, to produce such a tongue, many of those circumstances combined which were so favourable to Greece and Rome. When the men of the north conquered and colonized the island of Britain, they consisted of three tribes, the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons; and on being united into one people, their dialects, blended together, served to strengthen and enrich each other. The Britons, reduced to a state of serfage, but still holding an important place in the political scale, naturally added to the speech of their Anglo-Saxon masters; and the invasion and temporary supremacy of the Danes introduced further additions and modifications. Then succeeded a period of revolution, in which the language and manners of the court of Normandy predominated among the English courtiers of Edward the Confessor, so that the French tongue became the chief recommendation to royal favour;—and after this came the Norman Conquest, in which the English language was degraded into a badge of servitude, and abandoned to the enslaved populace. But although the kings and nobles of England for several generations disdained the language of the people over whom they ruled, and regarded the French tongue as the only language of courtesy, nobleness, and valour, the true English hearts still clung to their native speech with filial and patriotic affection. This devotedness was richly rewarded by the final predominance of their Saxon tongue, which superseded that of the court and the aristocracy, and the language of the conquerors only served to amplify that national speech which it had vainly endeavoured to annihilate. The native language of our country having thus asserted its superiority, and established its rule in the court and the college, became the utterance of learning and courtesy, the legitimate medium of communication for the noble, the priest, and the scholar; and therefore during the fourteenth century, when this emancipation was completed, English poetry, which had grown and strengthened in the form of ballads, romances, and chronicles, attained the first great stage of its early perfection in the works of Chaucer, and his illustrious contemporaries.

After this period, the enlargement and improvement of our language was beyond all former precedent. Foreign war and conquest, commercial intercourse, and the progress of travel and discovery, enriched it with the treasures of modern tongues; the labours of the learned not only added to it a large portion of words, but the principles of grammatical order and refinement; and the cultivation of every department of art and science added new nomenclatures, which were incorporated with the national language. In this manner, the rugged and scanty speech which Hengist and Horsa brought to our shores, and enforced upon the country at the sword point, became the nucleus of additions and improvements, until it rose into grandeur and harmony, and gave utterance to every poetic impulse. Nor was this all. These opportunities have been more or less common in the progress of every language from barbarism to refinement. But to these, which England enjoyed in so eminent a degree, we must also add the mildness of our climate, the fertility of our soil, the verdure and beauty of our scenery, the nature of our political institutions, which permit such freedom of speech and action, the heroic character of our historical associations, and that wide empire of British conquest upon which the sun never sets. In these circumstances, which also possessed so powerful an influence upon the happiest characteristics of the Greek and Roman languages, we shall read the sources of that copiousness and expressiveness for which our native tongue is so conspicuous, and by which it is so admirably fitted for all the purposes of poetry.

Of the state of poetry among the ancient Britons who originally occupied this island, we know little or nothing: all that can be asserted on this point is, that it was carefully cultivated among them; that much of the instructions of the Druids was delivered in verse, and that the bards, by their songs, possessed a powerful influence over the community, especially in time of war. The Saxons, who followed, and who became the fathers of the English nation, do not appear to have been at any time distinguished, either for their love of literature or poetical susceptibilities. Few fragments of the Anglo-Saxon poetry remain; the chief of these are the mythic legend of Beowulf and Hrothgar; the song of the elder Caedmon, "On

the Origin of Things;" metrical paraphrases of portions of the Holy Scriptures, ascribed to a second Caedmon; Athelstan's Song of Victory; with a few elegies and odes, chiefly of a religious character. From these scanty and imperfect specimens, we are unable to ascertain the exact laws of their metre, but their character, as compositions, is distinguished by that extremely artificial construction so unfavourable to the spirit of true poetry; abounding in a mechanical inversion of words and phrases, the frequent occurrence of alliteration, the omission of particles, and in abrupt transitions from one idea to another. During the earlier periods of their history, the Anglo-Saxons appear to have possessed that love of song by which all the tribes of ancient northern pirates were distinguished; and at their banquets, the harp was passed from hand to hand, while every guest was expected to sing a song in rotation; but when they had become a settled people amidst the abundance and luxuries of England, this love of poetry was gradually swallowed up in the accompanying sensualities of eating and drinking. Such continued to be the state of the popular taste until the period of the Norman Conquest. Glee-men and glee-women indeed there were in abundance, who were in great request at every feast and festival; but the popular poetry, of which they were the representatives, must have been at a very low ebb, when we remember that they were dancers, tumblers, and buffoons, as well as minstrels.

Although the Norman Conquest was destined to superinduce a new intellectual character upon the naturally rustic spirit of the Saxon stock, the poetry of England for a considerable period was rather thrown back than advanced by this important political change. In consequence of the contempt with which every thing English was viewed by the dominant race, the language was abandoned to the common people; and when it was used as the vehicle of poetical numbers, it was to celebrate the resistance of their national heroes to the Norman invaders, or panegyrise the exploits of the outlaws of the gay greenwood; themes which were so obnoxious to their masters, that they were sung in an under-key, and with fear and trembling. Except in such instances as these, the poetry of England continued to possess a foreign character, being composed either

in Latin or in French. Of the last language, there were two great dialects, one of which was called the *Langue d'oc*, and the other the *Langue d'oyl*, in both of which the trouveurs and troubadours of the Anglo-Norman court recorded the deeds and wonders of the classical or chivalric ages; and the themes of such minstrelsy soon became sufficiently abundant in the stirring events of those warlike periods. Knightly deeds of valour, the charms of love, and the graces of courtesy, were embodied in lays or legends, and sung at the banquets of the nobles; and the exploits of the founders of the great families of England found willing hearers and liberal rewarders in their descendants. A still wider and more heart-stirring theme succeeded with the Crusades; and the gorgeous fictions and scenery of the East were engrafted upon the northern poetry, more especially when English Richard, himself a perfect knight as well as an accomplished minstrel, lent both his lyre and sword to the poetical spirit of his country.

The time, however, was coming, although by slow approaches, and rude desultory efforts, when the Muse of England was to give utterance to her inspirations in the English language. So uncertain indeed was the transition state in which it ceased to be Saxon, and became English, that a translation of Wace's Metrical Chronicle, executed about the middle of the twelfth century by Layamon, a priest of Ernleye, has puzzled our most learned antiquarians, who cannot decide whether the version should be considered a Saxon or an English one. During the latter part of the reign of Henry III., and that of his son Edward I., numerous poets appear to have flourished in England, whose chief literary labours consisted of translations and imitations of the French romances. The principal name that occurs during this epoch, is that of Robert, a monk of Gloucester, who proposed to himself the very useful and difficult task of writing the History of England in verse, which he carried down to his own day. As a poem, this work is comparatively worthless; but it must have been an acceptable boon to the commons of his own time, composed as it was in the language and phraseology which had been so long endeared to them by courtly disfavour and contempt, and recording every historical event with the fidelity and minuteness of the most prosaic his-

torian. Next in the list of English poets of the middle ages is Robert de Brunne, also a monk, a translator who lived in the fourteenth century, and who compiled a rhyming Chronicle of the History of England, from the works of Wace, and Peter of Langtoft. Passing over other names of poets who lived about the same period, we may mention that of Laurence Minot, who wrote some spirit-stirring ballads narrating the victories of Edward III. Few reigns in English history were so well qualified to excite the poetical spirit by splendid chivalric spectacles and heroic achievements, as that of this monarch, graced as it was by the deeds of his son the Black Prince; and accordingly English poetry during the period of his administration assumed not only a distinctive form, but displayed some of its highest attributes. This was especially the case in those romances which portrayed the characters, the events, and the pageantries, of chivalry. A greater poet than any who had preceded him, was Robert Langland, who wrote his singular and well-known work entitled, "The Visions of Piers Plowman," probably about 1362. In this poem, the author appears to have imitated the old Saxon models of versification, rather than those of his own day, and the lines are constructed upon the principle of alliteration, rather than rhyme. His chief subjects were the abuses of religion, and the demoralization of society, in which he took occasion to attack the dissolute priests, friars, and nuns, with a freedom, severity, and energy, to which, as yet, they had been little accustomed. But the manner in which he handles his subject sufficiently shows, that the principles of taste in poetical composition were still very imperfectly understood. Piers Plowman is an impersonation of the Christian life, and he receives from Grace four strong oxen, whose names are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, to plough up the field of divine truth. He has afterwards assigned to him four vigorous bullocks, to harrow up the ground which has been already ploughed; and these are, Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory, and Jerome, the illustrious fathers of the Christian church.

But immeasurably beyond all the poets whom we have lately mentioned, was the immortal and inimitable Chaucer. This writer, in originality as well as excellence, stands alone. It was little indeed, comparatively speaking, that he could gain from

the lessons of those who had gone before him; they had left him nothing but a language still in a state of barbarism, and examples of Romanesque poetry which he considered only worthy of ridicule, and which he ridiculed accordingly in his romance of Sir Topas, as well as in the satirical references with which his Canterbury Tales abound. To him was consigned the important office of being, not only a great national poet, but the creator of the language and style of the national poetry. In these respects, as well as in the universality of his genius, he comes nearest to Shakspeare, of whom he may also be considered the type. While Langland, his distinguished contemporary, was endeavouring to reduce English poetry to the obsolete models of the old Anglo-Saxon verse, Chaucer, with a happier perception of poetical propriety, and the hidden powers of our language, was moulding it into that form which was so much more congenial to its character and construction; and for such a task he was well fitted, by the strength as well as the many-sidedness of his mind. Shakspeare alone excepted, no one has ever excelled, or even equalled him, in so much observation combined with such original invention—in the grandeur and minuteness of his descriptions—in pathos, and in humour—in the highest flights of imaginative poetry, and the most correct pictures of real and every-day life—in all that constitutes imagination, fancy, and correct observation, combined with a cheerful healthy temperament of mind, and great common sense. In looking at his splendid productions, the works of the minstrels and poetical moralists who precede him sink into utter insignificance. On account of his diversified power, he tried every kind of poetry which had been already cultivated, and succeeded in each, as well as extracted from every foreign author whatever was characteristic of excellence in his peculiar style. He was thus by turns a translator, an imitator, and an improver, as well as an original writer. But of all his writings the Canterbury Tales include the perfection of his multifarious qualities, and constitute his most distinguished work. Here he has concentrated all his knowledge, as well as all his minute powers of genius; and every story teems with brilliant pictures, with profound thoughts, with lively sallies of humour, with correct sketches

of common life, and an ample fund of close philosophical observation upon every state of society; thus constituting a work to which there is no parallel either in the English or in any other language. The idea of this production was probably adopted from Boccaccio's Decamerone; but the genius of Chaucer appears as superior to his original as the characters of the Knight and Squire, the Host, Reeve, and Miller, are superior to the undiscriminated ladies and gentlemen whom the Italian novelist created as the organs of his sentiments, the mere mouth-pieces of his hundred amusing stories.

The time of Chaucer, compared with previous ages, was a golden era of English poetry. Besides Langland, he had the "moral Gower" for his contemporary, and Occleve and Lydgate for his immediate successors. Each of these was illustrious in his particular sphere; but all of them were vastly inferior to the great master of English song, who stood unapproached and unrivalled. Of these poets, the last came the nearest to Chaucer, whom he calls his master. It might now have been expected that so bright a morning of English poetry would have strengthened into a cloudless mid-day; but the light was soon to be darkened by the eclipse of civil contention. The wars of the Roses occurred; and in the fierce rivalry of the houses of York and Lancaster, the princely and noble patrons of learning—Humphrey of Gloucester, and the Lords Tiptoft and Scales—perished by assassination, or upon the scaffold; the Universities were deserted; learning and study were abandoned; and society was thrown back into that state of barbarism, which is always the most frightful when it is accompanied with a sort of half civilization. Had the strife been a noble one, no such results would have followed; and poetry, instead of being silenced and trodden into the dust, would have soared over the contention, to animate the living and immortalize the dead. But it was a base and heartless struggle, in which all natural feelings were abandoned, and where the axe of the executioner was as actively employed as the sword of the warrior. Even after the strife itself had ceased, society had so greatly retrograded, and the hearts of men had become so steeled, that a considerable period was still to elapse before the cultivation of poetry could be resumed. A deathlike

silence consequently continued during the suspicious reign of Henry VII., and the greater part of that of his despotic successor; and it was only towards the close of the life of Henry VIII. that Wyat, Surrey, and Vaux, appeared as the successors of Chaucer, after two hundred years of poetical apathy had intervened.

It is gratifying, however, to think, that although the flame had been so completely repressed in one quarter, it had burst out in another. This was in Scotland, where a bright race of poets arose, to fill up the long gap that had occurred in English history. In that country flourished Barbour, Henry the Minstrel, James I., Henrysone, Gavin Douglas, Dunbar, Mersar, Sir David Lyndsay, and James V.—poets of whom any country would have been proud, and whose spirits were nursed among stirring deeds and picturesque scenery, and, above all, in that heroic struggle for national liberty which so often constitutes the very essence of poetry. They kept up an uninterrupted succession of song, therefore, from the time of Chaucer to the close of the reign of Henry VIII., when, strangely enough, they cease at this period, as if they had transferred the task to its original owners, in the consciousness that they had resigned it into more able hands. One very singular peculiarity of these Scottish poets is, that the earliest of them wrote English in a style considerably in advance of their age even in England; while the latest, instead of advancing, fell back to the rude Anglo-Saxon phraseology, which had been disused in England for centuries. Thus Barbour, Blind Harry, and James I., express themselves not only with the purity and correctness, but also in the language, of the Elizabethan period; while Lyndsay, and especially Gavin Douglas, who lived considerably later, use the English that prevailed in the south during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. We content ourselves with stating the simple fact as it stands. The causes of this wonderful advance and retrogression have sorely puzzled the philologist and antiquarian.

In consequence of the invention of printing, the general study of classical learning, and the discovery of America, it might have been expected that the English intellect would have been aroused at an earlier period, and that the commencement

of the sixteenth century, at least, would have been crowded with names illustrious in arts and literature. But the mightiest of all human subjects was now in agitation, and before it every minor pursuit was annihilated. This was the Reformation, by which the community of England was divided into two great parties, and employed in even a higher struggle than that of mere life and death. It is not in the midst of fearful exertion and intense excitement, that either communities or individuals are in a mood to be poetical: the storm must pass away, or be listened to with safety, before it can be portrayed in tuneful numbers; and during the reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Mary, when this the keenest of all conflicts was hanging in suspense, and when the hearts of men were alternately maddened or frozen with momentous every-day realities, any thing like poetical excitement would have been a very superfluous addition. But at the accession of Elizabeth, when the contest was drawing to its close, the continuing expansion of heart and soul demanded fresh subjects of thought, and new fields of action; and these were most naturally found in commerce, in discovery, in invention, and in literature, from all of which poetry imbibed the elements of a new and vigorous existence. It was natural that some poet of surpassing excellence should have been born from this new and favourable state of things; and the author of the Faery Queen appeared as the first great landmark of the new era. Spenser adopted for his subject the wonders and the achievements of chivalric life, and accordingly he extracted from the great masters of Italian poetry those incidents and ideas with which to enrich his narrative: he portrayed the characters and events of a by-gone state of existence, and therefore, while he wrote in the language of his day, he adopted, wherever he could, that antiquated phraseology which seemed the fittest to support and adorn such a theme. No poet ever possessed a richer and more discursive fancy; and he threw himself into that boundless universe of allegory in which he could expatiate without hinderance, and create without limitation. And then, the richness of the language and the music of versification, by which all the wonders of the Faery Queen successively unfold themselves, until the whole work is completed, remind us of the erection of that

magnificent and supernatural palace which Milton has described in his Paradise Lost:—

> " Anon, out of the earth, a fabric huge
> Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
> Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet."

Such glorious notes as those which were struck by Spenser, could not die away upon the void without awakening congenial echoes; and, accordingly, after the publication of the first part of the Faery Queen, there appeared successively two poems, rich in those qualities in which Spenser excelled: these were, Venus and Adonis, and Tarquin and Lucrece, which gave promise that, even in these departments of poetry, Spenser himself was likely to find a rival, or perhaps a superior. But Shakspeare soon discovered that his genius was best qualified to excel in another department, and he turned his attention to the drama, in which he was to reign without a rival. It is in this fact, perhaps, that we are to account for the circumstance of the poetry of England not becoming exclusively Spenserian, after the gorgeous pageantries of the Faery Queen had arrested the public gaze. A mightier than Spenser arose, and he created a more attractive style of poetry than that of the allegory—and therefore Shakspeare, and not Spenser, became the great model of imitation. Dramatic writing, accordingly, became the chief glory of what is called the Elizabethan period of our poetry; that is, the latter part of the reign of Elizabeth, and the whole of that of her successor. Not to speak of Shakspeare's early contemporaries, Marlow, Greene, and Peele, upon whom he so greatly improved, there were those of a later date — Ben Jonson, the friend, and all but worshipper of Shakspeare; Lyly, Kyd, Webster, Decker, Lodge, Beaumont and Fletcher, Chapman, Shirley, Marston, Massinger, Ford, Tourneur, Heywood—men who received their dramatic impulses, either directly or indirectly, from the great master of the drama, and whom, illustrious though many of them were, they were unable to rival, and could at best only imitate. During the life-time of Shakspeare alone, indeed, there was a prodigious amount of poetry, so far as mere *quantity* is concerned, that was not of a dramatic character; and the names of two hundred and thirty English poets have been recorded by Dr. Drake, as having

written within the short period of fifty years. But, with the exception of a few, their works were lost amidst the superior attractions of the dramatic writers, just as the writings of the latter were, with a few happy exceptions, extinguished in the immeasurable superiority of Shakspeare.

But popular although dramatic writing continued to be, in preference to every other species of poetry, it had to contend against a strength and violence of prejudice, under which at last it was obliged to succumb. This was the age of the Puritans, who regarded every thing pertaining to the stage not only as frivolous, but sinful; and who warred as fiercely against the theatre, as they did against popery, surplices, and lawn sleeves. When they obtained the ascendancy, therefore, the drama was proscribed along with the other abominations of monarchy and prelacy, and in 1642, the Long Parliament decreed that the acting of all stage plays should be discontinued. This was followed up by several severe enactments, in which acting was made a public offence, and all its adherents were rendered liable to fine or imprisonment. These expressions of the public feeling were a death-blow to dramatic writing, from which it has never recovered; for although English poetry afterwards regained its full strength, and attained the highest excellence, it was in every department except the drama: that continued to be carefully shunned as a sphere of intellectual exertion, in which success was difficult and uncertain; and therefore, since that period, notwithstanding the number and excellence of our poets, we have had no writers of plays equal to the second-rate dramatic writers who flourished at the close of the sixteenth, and the earlier part of the seventeenth centuries. The reign of Puritanism, and the popular feeling it produced, were powerful enough to stamp a sentence of reprobation upon this the most important department of poetic writing, and to confine the national poetry itself within a channel which it has never since dared to overflow. It is true, indeed, that after this period we meet with such names as those of Dryden, Otway, Congreve, and Vanbrugh; but do their dramatic efforts exhibit that boldness, spontaneity, and love of the art, which are to be found in the writings of Marlowe, Ford, Massinger, and Shirley?

Of the throng of unremembered poets, not dramatic, who wrote from the time of Shakspeare to the period of the Commonwealth, a few names only are worthy of being rescued from oblivion. Of these, the first in merit, although not in time, is Drummond of Hawthornden, who, after the long interval that had elapsed in Scotland since the days of Lyndsay and James V., appeared to vindicate the poetical character of his countrymen. Of all the English sonneteers from Surrey downwards, none equalled Drummond in his admirable transfusion of the chief beauties of the Italian language into our own tongue, combined with tenderness of feeling and correctness of taste. There was also Michael Drayton, the poetical chronicler, and author of the Polyolbion—a writer who displayed learning, observation, and poetic merit, in a more than ordinary measure; and Daniel, who wrote a sort of epic poem on the wars between the houses of York and Lancaster, which is distinguished by the modern character of its language, and the smoothness and evenness of its rhythm; and Giles and Phineas Fletcher, who with considerable original talent devoted themselves to the imitation of Spenser, and who would have reached a higher excellence if they had been more judicious in the choice of their subjects. There was also Sir John Davies, who is chiefly remembered by his philosophical poem, *Nosce Teipsum*, in which he has used that difficult species of measure called the quatrain, with a happier effect than either Davenant or Dryden, who attempted the same experiment, the former in Gondibert, and the latter in Annus Mirabilis. Dr. Donne, also, who was contemporary with Davies, was a poet of great strength and deep piercing wit, but of studied obscurity, who seems to have delighted in puzzling his readers, and setting all their faculties upon the stretch.

During the reign of Charles I., the ascendancy of the Commonwealth, and part of the reign of Charles II., the poets of England are usually divided into two classes, the Metaphysical and the Classical. Of the first class were Cowley, Herrick, and a host of followers, who abounded in forced illustrations and far-fetched conceits, by which they endeavoured to aggrandize their ideas in proportion to the toil they occasioned in discovering them. This school was indeed strong, through

the powerful genius, fertile imagination, and lively natural feeling, of Cowley, by which he consecrated a system that of itself would have soon fallen and come to nothing. The classical school, the leaders of which were Denham, Waller, and Carew, endeavoured to imitate the spirit of the ancient models, and refine the harshness of their native language, in which they succeeded so happily, as to merit the title of Reformers of our poetry. This was certainly high praise, even though they cannot lay claim to that of being first-rate poets also. Besides these two classes which we have mentioned, the period abounded in religious poets, at the head of whom may be placed Crashaw, Herbert, Wither, Marvel, and Quarles. It was the fashion during the periods of Charles II. and Anne, to decry these writers under the name of Puritans—a title of which most of them were by no means covetous, as they belonged to the opposite party in politics; but their stigmatisers found the term convenient, as it was a blighting epithet until that of Methodist was invented; and by deterring readers from the perusal of such authors, they could better conceal their own numerous plagiaries which they committed upon the proscribed pages of these religious poets. The most talented and imaginative was Crashaw, whose translations, or rather paraphrases, from the Italian of Strada, are splendid improvements upon the original; while his own poems breathe, in many instances, the very spirit of harmony, imagination, and feeling. Herbert, Wither, and Quarles, with great liveliness, fancy, and strength of intellect, unfortunately attached themselves to the metaphysical school, the style of which, although ridiculous enough when applied to subjects of mere earthly feeling, was still more unfortunate in the service of religion and devotion. In addition also to metaphysical obscurities and conceits, they addressed their productions to the eye, by moulding them into the most grotesque forms, so that the verses were frequently arranged to represent sand-glasses, altar pieces, and wings. But notwithstanding these perversities of taste, they exhibit not only passages, but whole poems, pervaded with the full strength and spirit of genuine poetry.

During this important era in our national history, a voice was heard by fits over the whole swell of English song—a

voice of mingled grandeur and sweetness even already without a rival, and which was to rise at last from earth to heaven, and fill the universe with its melody. Some of the early poems of Milton, and especially his Hymn on the Nativity, Lycidas, Comus, L'Allegro, and Il Penseroso, while they immeasurably distanced all the works of his contemporaries, were only the striking of those commencing notes by which he ascertained the compass and harmony of his heaven-bestowed instrument. Even from his earliest years he had laboured steadfastly for "an immortality of fame;" and conscious of the power that was within him, he had felt an inward prompting that he might "leave something so written to after-times as they should not willingly let die." And no man, perhaps, was ever better qualified by previous training for so great an achievement as Milton. He was incontestably the most learned of our English poets; he had travelled, when his taste was formed and his understanding matured, among the rich and classic scenery of Italy, and enjoyed its accomplished and intellectual society; and when he returned to England, it was at the call of duty, and to mingle in those great national events from which a vigorous mind would acquire greater strength, and a generous heart a more lofty disinterestedness. Then, too, he mingled in common intercourse with the great master-spirits of the age; the patriotic Pym, the upright and gallant Fairfax, the incorruptible Marvell, and Howe, the learned and eloquent, and above all, with Cromwell himself, in whose gigantic intellect and correspondent achievements he had a living impersonation of those heroes whom he had so deeply studied in his beloved records of the classical ages. But even yet the time had not arrived to realize the great purpose of his existence. An after history followed of persecution, and neglect, and poverty, in which his heart was to be weaned from earthly themes and affections, only to be fixed more intently upon those that were correspondent to his character and powers; and, worse than all, there was the calamity of blindness, by which the present world was extinguished, so that to him there was no home but heaven, and no reality but that of the spiritual existence. It was natural, therefore, that he should no longer think of his formerly-selected but inferior theme of Prince Arthur, and the

deeds of British and Armoric chivalry: the world that is unseen was his abode, and thither only, in the language of scripture, "he could flee away and be at rest." Thus it was that from first to last—in prosperity and adversity—with the clear-sighted eyes of study and observation, and amidst the solemn starless midnight of remembrance and meditation, he was trained by heaven itself to become the earthly laureate of its deeds in the work of Paradise Lost. Even the love of present reputation also, that solace which would have been so cheering to the heart of a blind old man, and which might have tempted him to make concessions to the tastes and progress of society, could not obtain from him a single sacrifice in return for all it could bestow. As Milton sang in darkness, he also sang in solitude: this he was assured would be his fate when he selected such a theme. He knew the state of society too well to anticipate its sympathy or approval; but he was writing for eternity, and not for time; and he knew that every note of his anthem would find an imperishable echo which would sound through future ages. And was not such a thought, when he had closed his labour of immortality, the richest reward that life could bestow—an over-payment for blindness itself, and all the loneliness and neglect to which he was abandoned?

The anticipations of Milton when he selected such a subject as that of Paradise Lost, were verified by the event. On the restoration of Charles II., an access of frantic loyalty had taken possession of the public mind, so that the courtiers, and the educated classes in general, who at that time composed the aristocracy of England, were too much devoted to Church and State to read any thing that had been written by the Latin Secretary of Cromwell. It was deemed indeed a marvellous stretch of favour, that "the blind old Roundhead" was even permitted to live. To have relished Milton's poem, would not only have required an amount of taste and scholarship not very common at that period, but a purity and elevation of moral feeling which was still more rarely to be found. Paradise Lost, therefore, with the exception of a chosen few whom the age had been unable to corrupt, was by most readers thrown aside, or overlooked, for the more attractive gaiety and licentiousness of such writers as Sedley, Rochester, and Buckingham. The

poetry of England was now reduced to a very low ebb. The "ribald king and court" regarded poetry, as they did every thing else, merely as an instrument that could contribute to their amusement; and poets accordingly, who knew no inspiration but court favour and royal approbation, took their style of writing from France, and their themes from the obscenities of the day. A correspondent character was also introduced into the new drama; and plays were written in rhyme, and filled with every kind of moral perversity, to suit the tastes of lordly debauchees, and coroneted prostitutes. Such a state of taste in poetic composition naturally produced abundance of inanity, and there is therefore a mournful satisfaction in rescuing from the mass those few names that were not degraded by intellectual, as well as moral abasement. Of these, there was Otway, who wrote several unreadable dramatic pieces, but who finally produced Venice Preserved and The Orphan, in which he exhibited a depth of feeling and power of description, that promised to raise him next to Shakspeare, and who died at the premature age of thirty. There was also Butler, who, in his Hudibras, combined the greatest extent of erudition, with a drollery and keenness of satire which have never been surpassed. But the noblest of all the names of this period, next to Milton, is that of Dryden, who began the work of poetry in early life, improved with every successive effort, and at last, in old age, attained to a pre-eminenee which no succeeding poet has been able to equal. Without either the lofty imagination or the delicate susceptibilities that compose the most important elements of poetry, he possessed such a strength of observation, vigour of thought, correctness of taste, and mastery of the whole range of our language, as constituted him one of the greatest of our national poets. He too was most unfortunate in the circumstance of having been born in such an age, when he was obliged to exert his God-given strength in making sport for the Philistines, instead of, like Milton, devoting himself to some great work that would have conferred lasting honour upon his country and his own name. But the taste of the age demanded other gratification, and he had not self-denial to resist. Against his better judgment, he yielded to the call, and

left a name which all lovers of poetry will be constrained to cherish, but over which Virtue will never cease to weep.

The great successor of Dryden, and also his rival, was Pope. The former, whose chief strength lay in grasp of intellect and vigour of language, endeavoured to excel in that species of poetry for which such powers were best qualified; and accordingly he reasoned in rhyme, and was the poet of philosophy, a department in which he stands unrivalled, on account of his wonderful command of poetic diction, and his power of expressing the noblest sentiments in simple and familiar language. Pope saw, that in this it was hopeless to contend with his master, and consequently he did not attempt it; but as he too was an ethical poet, he tried to produce similar effects by those faculties in which he most excelled. And no one ever took a more judicious measure of his own powers, or turned them to better account, than Pope. Without the sublimity of Milton, or the creative fancy of Spenser, his mind was richly stored with the fruits of meditation and study: he had tenderness of feeling, delicacy of perception, and an ear modulated for the harmony of language beyond any of his predecessors. He wisely, therefore, selected for his path the tender and impressive in didactic poetry, where the surpassing grace, delicacy, and polish, of his language and versification, appeared with happiest effect; and the world was soon charmed with the annunciation of moral truths, in a style of ease and harmony which Dryden only occasionally reached, but which, in Pope, is sustained and consistent. In the choice of his subjects, also, he was peculiarly happy; and in consequence of this, each of his poems is a complete, highly finished, and perfect picture. Criticism itself finds it difficult to cavil with such productions as The Rape of the Lock, the Elegy on the Death of an unfortunate Lady, or the Epistle of Eloisa to Abelard: no flaw is perceptible; no excrescence, however slight, upon which to lay hold—all is as smooth, and also as bright, as a polished surface of spotless marble. Even the faults of Pope arise from the excess of this excellence, and his melody is so continuous, that the sated ear occasionally longs for a note of discord to break the monotony. His system also of ending the

sense with the line, and delivering his ideas in couplets, confines poetry within narrow limits, and gives it too much the nature of a mechanical process. These faults, for which Pope atoned so richly by his numerous merits, were glaringly apparent in the versification of his followers. Without the taste and delicacy of their master, and his command of variety and effect within a limited compass, they constructed verses by as artificial a process as brick-making, and built up poems as if they were erecting houses. There was the line, with the pause ending invariably on the fourth or sixth syllable, and the everlasting see-saw of the couplet, while the chief requisite of a poet was merely to possess a good ear. As it was so easy to manufacture upon this principle, the learned and the unlearned, the poetical and the prosaic, people of every age, sex, and degree, inundated the world with their commodities of verse, until poetry itself threatened to become nothing but prose measured off and rhymed—and the jaded public clamoured for something new.

The period of Queen Anne, which has been commonly reckoned the Augustan era of poetry in England, although the epithet would be better applied to that of Elizabeth and James I., produced a distinguished succession of authors, of whom the principal were Prior, Addison, Swift, and Gay. The poetry of Prior is that of a gentleman who writes at ease, and who possesses the talents of the artist and the scholar; and therefore there is an airy, graceful lightness about his poetry, combined with correctness, which has rendered it, and especially his apologues and tales, deservedly in high favour with the public. Of Addison, the best that can be said is, that, like his prose writings, his poems exhibited correctness, grace, refinement, and some power of fancy; but they are wholly devoid of all the higher attributes of poetry. Swift's principal inspiration as a poet is derived, not from the Muse, but Misanthropy, and his verses exhibit that ferocious energy and blistering power of satire, which rendered his prose works so terrible. Still, however, he exhibits none of that exclusive love towards the divine art which is so necessary to constitute a genuine poet; and he seems to rhyme, merely because it afforded a change in the venting of his atrabilious humour,

after he had exhausted it in prose. Gay had more imagination and a livelier fancy than any of these poets, with the exception of Prior, and therefore, without either the ostentatious pomp of Addison, or the rough and reckless energy of Swift, his works have always possessed a wider popularity.

Didactic poetry, and the delineation of the artificial world, which had been confirmed by the powerful authority of Dryden and Pope, had now obtained exclusive possession of the public, so that a picture of simple nature or powerful passion would have been regarded as frivolous or unnatural. But even while the established mode was still in the ascendancy, and successive writers were exhausting it to the lees and dregs, a healthy re-action began to manifest itself—slowly and gradually, indeed, at first, as it was in contradiction to the popular taste, but indicative of the dawn of a better day. The first of these new poets was Thomson, the author of The Seasons. It was indeed a bold and an original attempt at the time, to write so large a poem in blank verse wholly devoted to descriptions of nature and rural life, and but for one of those favourable accidents which so frequently decide the fate of authorship, it might never have seen the light. But The Seasons was worthy of the immortality it obtained, in consequence of its surpassing merits. Of late years, the attempts at describing nature had been chiefly in pastoral poetry; but the lawns and fields over which it expatiated were a sort of Ranelagh or Vauxhall, and the shepherds and shepherdesses were fine ladies and gentlemen, who carried crooks of ivory bound with ribbons fresh from Cheapside or Bond Street. Then there was Goldsmith, who so touchingly described "sweet Auburn," and sketched its principal characters with such graphic power—and Collins, whose chief attempt was to avoid the beaten track and hackneyed epithets, and the beauty of whose poetry, neglected at first, has continued to be more and more appreciated to the present day. A powerful mind among these innovators was also that of Young, who struck out a new path for himself, and combined the highest species of didactic and moral poetry, with deep delineations of feeling, and powerful appeals to the passions. The Night Thoughts, indeed, was a daring experiment upon the public taste, in which the author seemed to anticipate that

style of poetry which was afterwards to be so effective under the more powerful mastery of Byron. Gray, also, the most erudite of our poets next to Milton, unfolded beautiful glimpses of nature and feeling, which would have been more ample and permanent, but for that timidity which fettered him to established rule. But it was reserved for Cowper alone to break through all those trammels that had enthralled the spirit of poetry, and herald the full emancipation of the nineteenth century, the commencement of which he was permitted to behold. It was late in life that he commenced the writing of poetry, so that he had not the errors and prejudices of youth to unlearn: he wrote, not so much for fame, as to mollify the anguish of mental disease, and therefore he felt himself independent either of popular approbation, or the dread of criticism. When the poem was written, his pains were assuaged, and having fulfilled its commission, it mattered little to the author whether the winds carried it to fame or oblivion. To these it may be added, that he was severely devout, and wished to reform the world which he believed to be lying in error, and thus its conventional phraseology had in his eyes none of that authority which it had hitherto exercised over less independent minds. Hence the matured vigour and sturdy independence which his verses so eminently possessed. Men were astonished to find themselves addressed in numbers so different in time and tune from those to which their ears had been modulated, and were at first inclined to turn away in contempt: but they were soon compelled to feel, that the spirit of the old English poetry had risen from the dead in all its former flexibility and power. Had the career of Cowper been brief, these effects might have been transitory; but his life extended over a considerable space, and his writings were numerous, so that he lived to complete the dethronement of the established poetry, and to prepare the world for the long-forgotten language of nature and reality.

While such was the history of poetry in England during the eighteenth century, a similar process of emancipation had been going on in Scotland, where a strictly national species of poetry was cultivated, which was independent of the dominant mode. Ramsay, in his songs, and especially in his Gentle Shepherd, had

daringly broke loose from that puling sentimentality of purling streams with which the rural scenery of the poets abounded, and had delineated real nature, as well as genuine passion, in the nervous and flexible dialect of his own romantic land; and Fergusson, who confined himself to city life, exhibited with equal truth and fidelity the habits and humours of the town. But a poet of Nature's own making succeeded, to startle, subdue, and enthral, by the utterance of more intense feelings than the cold children of art had dared to express. Burns, to use his own beautiful simile, was found by the Muse of his country, like Elisha, at the plough, where she cast her mantle over him, and from that moment he sang with an obedient and overflowing heart of the peasant's home, and the peasant's joys and affections—all that nature loved and cherished, in language which Nature herself inspired, and the spirits of men, borne onward by the resistless impulse, could only listen and admire. Thus, while Cowper in England was piercing refined society through and through with the keenness of his satire, and alternately pleading, expostulating, and reproaching, in strains that modulated themselves to every change of his theme, Burns in Scotland, untrammelled by rule, was pouring forth the rich and impetuous tide of song with the vehemence of an inspired prophet, while every glen and mountain caught and returned the echoes of his glorious melody. Adieu, therefore, to the cold formalities and pedantic restraints which the poetry of the eighteenth century had so slavishly obeyed! The idol fell, and the ritual disappeared, at the approach of a more true and holier worship.

THE

BOOK OF THE POETS.

CHAUCER TO BEATTIE.

So dark a cloud obscures the early history of the great Father of English poetry, that no antiquarian has been able to trace his origin; and he has been alternately represented as of noble or ignoble birth, according to the caprice of to biographers. It is certain, however, that he was born in London, in 1328; and there is some probability that he was the son of a vintner, who died in 1348. The young poet appears to have been educated partly at Oxford, and partly at Cambridge; and at the latter place, when only eighteen years old, he produced his Court of Love. His proficiency as a scholar was wonderful for the age, and it embraced every department of learning then cultivated. When he was between thirty and forty years of age, Edward III., probably on account of Chaucer's high reputation as a poet and a scholar, appointed him controller of the custom of wool, an office of great honour and trust, but involving considerable application. But the chief patron of the talented and favoured courtier was John of Gaunt, the powerful duke of Lancaster, to whom Chaucer at length became related, by marrying Philippa Rouet, sister of Catherine, the mistress, and afterwards the wife of the duke.

As John of Gaunt had shown a leaning towards the opinions of Wickliff, he was the enemy of the clergy, and an advocate of ecclesiastic reform. Chaucer sympathised with the principles of his patron, in consequence of which he fearlessly exposed in his writings the iniquities of the monks and friars, and inflicted upon them the uttermost of his hostility both in satire and argument. These powers of annoyance were terrible weapons, which the assailed were unable to resist, except by anathemas and clamours; and it is, perhaps, not too much to consider Chaucer as a very important though remote cause of the Reformation in England, by the tendency of his works to bring the Romish hierarchy into contempt, and to keep alive the spirit of the Wickliffites. Hitherto, the poet had lived in wealth, and amidst the luxuries of a court, at this time the most splendid in Europe; but as the reign of Richard II. continued, the favour of the duke of Lancaster declined. Chaucer, in consequence of this change in the fortunes of his patron, disposed of his pensions; and bidding adieu to the court, he retired in 1388, to his favourite Woodstock. It was a happy secession for English literature; for it was there, when he had reached at least his sixtieth year, that he commenced his Canterbury Tales, incontestibly the best of his productions.

The different accounts of the last years of Chaucer's life are so contradictory, that it is unnecessary to particularise them. We are assured, however, that, although he never regretted the many bitter things he had written against the clergy, yet he grieved deeply over those portions of his works that had any tendency to foster a licentious spirit; and that as death approached, he frequently exclaimed, in the anguish of his heart, 'Woe is me! woe is me, that I cannot recall and annul them: but, alas! they are now continued from man to man, and I cannot do what I desire!' To express also his repentance more permanently, he composed those touching lines entitled "Good Counsaile of Chaucer.' His death is supposed to have occurred October 25, 1400, when he was seventy-two years old.

The writings of Chaucer, that 'Well of English undefiled,' are too thoroughly appreciated in the present day to require a particular analysis. While they indicate in their author a scholar wonderfully accomplished for so early a period, they abound in such truthful delineations as well as minute touches of nature, that they show in the highest degree the man of observation as well as study. Thus it is, that his Canterbury Pilgrims are living men of flesh and blood, rather than passing shadows. We know every article of their costume, and every lineament of their faces; and when we hear them speak, we recognise each speaker, because he uses his own peculiar phraseology. In this department of dramatic power he approaches more nearly than any other writer our own inimitable Shakspeare.

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CHAUCER.

CONFESSION OF PALAMON.

Clere was the day, as I have told or this,
And Theseus, with alle joye and blis,
With his Ipolita, the fayre quene,
And Emelie, yclothed all in grene,
On hunting ben they ridden really.
And to the grove, that stood ther faste by,
In which ther was an hart as men him told,
Duk Theseus the streite way hath hold.
And to the launde he rideth him ful right
Ther was the hart ywont to have his flight,
And over a brooke, and so forth on his wey.
This duke wol have a cours at him or twey
With houndes, swiche as him lust to commaunde:
And when this duk was comen to the launde,
Under the sonne he loked, and anon
He was ware of Arcite and Palamon,
That foughten breme, as it were bolles two
The brighte swerdes wenten to and fro
So hidously, that with the leste stroke
It semed that it wolde felle an oke.

But what they weren, nothing he ne wote.
This duke his courser with his sporres smote,
And at a stert he was betwix hem two,
And pulled out a swerd, and cried, "Ho!
No more, up peine of lesing of your hed.
By mighty Mars, he shal anon be ded,
That smiteth any stroke, that I may sen.
But telleth me what mistere men ye ben,
That ben so hardy for to fighten here
Withouten any juge, other officere,
As though it were in listes really."
This Palamon answered hastily,
And saide: "Sire, what nedeth wordes mo?
We have the deth deserved bothe two.
Two woful wretches ben we, two caitives,
That ben accombred of our owen lives;
And as thou art a rightful lord and juge,
Ne yeve us neyther mercie ne refuge.
And sle me first, for seinte charitee.
But sle my felaw eke as wel as me.
Or sle him first; for, though thou know it lite,
This is thy mortal fo, this is Arcite,
That fro thy lond is banished on his hed,
For which he hath deserved to be ded.
For this is he that came unto thy gate,
And sayde, that he highte Philostrate.
Thus hath he japed thee ful many a yere,
And thou hast maked him thy chief squiere,
And this is he, that loveth Emelie.
"For sith the day is come that I shall die
I make plainly my confession,
That I am thilke woful Palamon,
That hath thy prison broken wilfully.
I am thy mortal fo, and it am I
That loveth so hot Emelie the bright,
That I wold dien present in hire sight.
Therfore I axe deth and my jewise.
But sle my felaw in the same wise,
For both we have deserved to be slain."
This worthy duk answerd anon again,
And sayd, "This is a short conclusion.
Your owen mouth, by your confession
Hath damned you, and I wol it recorde.
It nedeth not to peine you with the corde.
Ye shul be ded by mighty Mars the rede."

From The Knightes Tale.

THE MERCHANT

A Marchant was ther with a forked berd,
In mottelee, and highe on hors he sat,
And on his hed a Flaundrish bever hat.
His botes clapsed fayre and fetisly.
His resons spake he ful solempnely,
Souning alway the encrese of his winning.
He wold the see were kept for any thing
Betwixen Middleburgh and Orewell,
Wel coud he in eschanges sheldes selle.
This worthy man ful wel his wit besette;
There wiste no wight that he was in dette,
So stedefastly didde he his governance,
With his bargeines, and with his chevisance.
Forsothe he was a worthy man withalle,
But soth to sayn, I n'ot how men him calle.

From Prologue to the Canterbury Tales.

EMELIE.

Thus passeth yere by yere, and day by day,
Till it felle ones in a morwe of May
That Emelie, that fayrer was to sene
Than is the lilie upon his stalke grene,
And fresher than the May with floures newe
(For with the rose colour strof hire hewe;
I n'ot which was the finer of hem two),
Er it was day, as she was wont to do,
She was arisen, and all redy dight;
For May wol have no slogardie a-night.
The seson priketh every gentil herte,
And maketh him out of his slepe to sterte,
And sayth, "Arise, and do thin observance."
This maketh Emelie han remembrance
To don honour to May, and for to rise,
Yclothed was she freshe for to devise.
Hire yelwe here was broided in a tresse,
Behind hire back, a yerde long I gesse.
And in the gardin at the Sonne uprist
She walketh up and doun wher as hire list.
She gathereth floures, partie white and red,
To make a sotel gerlond for hire hed,
And as an angel hevenlich she song.

From The Knightes Tale.

EMETRIUS.

With Arcita, in stories as men find,
The gret Emetrius the king of Inde,
Upon a stede bay, trapped in stele,
Covered with cloth of gold diapred wele
Came riding like the god of armes Mars.
His cote-armure was of a cloth of Tars,
Couched with perles, white, and round and grete.
His sadel was of brent gold new ybete:
A mantlet upon his shouldres hanging
Bret-ful of rubies red, as fire sparkling.
His crispe here like ringes was yronne,
And that was yelwe, and glittered as the Sonne.
His nose was high, his eyen bright citrin,
His lippes round, his colour was sanguin,
A fewe fraknes in his face yspent,
Betwixen yelwe and blake somdel ymeint,
And as a leon he his loking caste.
Of five and twenty yer his age I caste.
His berd was well begonnen for to spring;
His vois was as a trompe thondering.
Upon his hed he wered of laurer grene
A gerlond freshe and lusty for to sene,
Upon his hond he bare for his deduit
An egle tame, as any liley whit,
An hundred lordes had he with him there,
All armed save hir hedes in all hir gere,
Ful richely in alle manere thinges.
For trusteth wel, that erles, dukes, kinges
Were gathered in this noble compagnie,
For love, and for encrese of chevalrie.
About this king ther ran on every part
Ful many a tame leon and leopart.

From the Knightes Tale.

SIRE THOPAS.

Sire Thopas was a doughty swain,
White was his face as paindemaine,
His lippes red as rose.
His rudde is like scarlet in grain,
And I you tell in good certain
He had a semely nose.

His here, his berde, was like safroun,
That to his girdle raught adoun,
His shoon of cordewane;
Of Brugges were his hosen broun;
His robe was of ciclatoun,
That coste many a jane.

He coude hunt at the wilde dere,
And ride on hauking for the rivere
With grey goshauk on honde:
Therto he was a good archere,
Of wrastling was ther non his pere,
Ther ony ram shuld stonde.

For many a maide bright in bour
They mourned for him *par amour*,
Whan hem wer bet to slepe;
But he was chaste and no lechour,
And swete as is the bramble flour,
That bereth the red hepe.

From the Rime of Sire Thopa

GOOD COUNSAIL OF CHAUCER.

Fle fro the prease, and dwell with soothfastnesse,
Suffise unto thy good though it be small,
For horde hath hate, and climbing tikelnesse,
Prease hath envy, and wele is blent over all,
Savour no more than thee behove shall,
Rede well thy selfe, that other folks canst rede,
And trouth thee shall deliver, it is no drede.

Paine thee not ech crooked to redresse
In trust of her that tourneth as a ball,
Great rest standeth in little businesse,
Beware also to spurn againe a nall,
Strive not as doth a crocke with a wall,
Deme thy selfe that demest others dede,
And trouth thee shall deliver, it is no drede.

That thee is sent receive in buxomesse,
The wrastling of this world asketh a fall,
Here is no home, here is but wildernesse,
Forth pilgrime, forth beast out of thy stall,
Looke up on high, and thanke God of all,
Weive thy lusts, and let thy ghost thee lede,
And trouth thee shall deliver, it is no drede.

Of JOHN GOWER, the year in which he was born cannot be ascertained. One account also makes him a native of Kent, while another asserts that he was born in Wales. His chief work was the *Confessio Amantis*, finished probably in 1393, in which he severely reprobated the clergy. Its origin was rather singular. As the poet was sailing on the Thames, he was accidentally encountered by the royal barge, in which Richard II. was sailing. The king hailed him, held a conference with him, and desired him 'to booke some new thing;' and The Confession was the result. Gower died at an advanced age in 1402.

FORTUNE UNJUSTLY BLAMED,

And netheless yet some men write,
And sayn fortune is to wite:
And some men holde opinion,
That it is constellation,
Whiche causeth all that a man doothe.
God wote of bothe whiche is soothe;
The worlde, as of his propre kinde
Was ever untrew; and as the blinde,
Improperly he demeth fame:
He blameth that is nought to blame,
And preiseth, that is nought to preise.
Thus whan he shall the thinges peise,
Ther is deceit in his balance;
And all is that the variance,
Of us, that shulde us better avise;
For after that we fall and rise,
The worlde ariste, and falleth with all:
So that the man is over all
This owne cause of wele and wo.
That we fortune clepe so,
Out of the man himselfe it groweth,
And who that other wise troweth?
Beholde the people of Israel;
For ever, while thei bidden well,
Fortune was them debonaire:
And when thei bidden the contraire,
Fortune was contrariende:
So that it proveth wele at ende,
Why that the worlde is wonderfull,
And maie no while stande full,
Though that it seme wele besayn;
For every worldes thing is vaine,
And ever gothe the whele aboute,
And ever stant a man in doute.
Fortune stant no while still:
So hath ther no man his will.
Als far as any man maie knowe,
There lasteth nothing but a throwe.

From the Prologue to Confessio Amantis.

One of the immediate successors of Chaucer, and a voluminous writer, is supposed to have been born about 1375, and ordained a priest in 1397. After he had spent some time at Oxford, he travelled in France and Italy, where he completed his education; and on returning to England, opened a school in his monastery, where he gave lessons in poetry and belles-lettres, to the sons of the nobility. During his own day, and indeed for two centuries later, the works of Lydgate enjoyed a popularity that was far beyond their merit; but still he deserves the high praise of having amplified and refined the English language; and according to Warton, he was the first of our writers whose style was clothed with that perspicuity in which the English phraseology appears at this day to an English reader. The year of Lydgate's death is uncertain.

APPEAL IN BEHALF OF MAN.

Then kneeled downe the seconde Ierarchye,
And humbly sayd; "O soverayne lorde of all,
We be ymade thy myght to magnefye,
And to observe thy lawe imperyall,
As worthy lordes that in generall,
With besy cure supporten thyn empyre,
And with knyghthode obeyen thy desyre.

Hens from us all the proude Prynce of Derkness,
As captyve, toke lordes of eche estate;
Then man was made thrugh the hevenly goodnes,
For to restore this kyngdome desolate.
But, welawaye! wherto was man create,
Syth that the lyon of all cruelte,
In his derke lake, of him hath soveraynte?

Our worthy lordshippes, and our maners olde,
O mighty God! how long voyde shall they be?
Thyn heyres eke, how longe shall deth withholde?
Syth thou arte lyfe, why hath deth soveraynte?
If thou be kynge, to thyn honour thou se;
So bynde the Fende, and take man by conquest,
Unto thy blysse, and set thy reygne in rest.

Foure thousande yere is suffysaunt
For to punysshe olde Adam for a taste;
And, welawaye! hell is exuberaunt
With his ofspringes, and our realme stondeth waste.
Now rewe on man, thou, that all mercy haste,
For now is tyme of mercy, and of peas;
And tyme come that all vengeaunce sholde seas.

From the Courte of Sapyence.

NOTWITHSTANDING the fame which this the first author of the Scottish school of poetry has justly acquired as a poet and historian, his personal history is both scanty and obscure. The general idea is, that he was born at Aberdeen, in Scotland, about the year 1316, and in 1357 was appointed Archdeacon of his native town His thirst for learning was so great that, in 1364, and again in 1368, when already advanced in years, he travelled from Scotland to the University of Oxford, to perfect the acquirements which he had made in his own country. His chief work, The Bruce, was undertaken at the request of David, the successor of Robert Bruce, who bestowed upon the Archdeacon a pension for his encouragement. Barbour died in 1396.

COMBAT BETWEEN BRUCE AND SIR HENRY BOHUN.

Schyr Henry the Boune, the worthy,
That wes a wycht knycht, and a hardy;
And to the erle off Herfurd cusyne;
Armyt in armys gud and fyne;
Come on a sted, a bow schote ner,
Befor all othyr that thar wer:
And knew the king, for that he saw
Him swa rang his men on raw;
And by the croune that wes set
Alsua upon his bassynet.
And towart him he went in hy.
And quhen the king sua apertly
Saw him cum, forouth all his feris,
In hy till him the hors he steris.
And when Schyr Henry saw the king
Cum on, for owtyn abaysing,
Till him he raid in full gret hy,
He thoucht that he suld weill lychtly
Wyn him, and haf him at his will,
Sen he him horsyt saw sa ill.
Sprent thai samyn in till a ling.
Schyr Henry myssit the noble king;
And he, that in his sterapys stud,
With the ax that wes hard and gud,
With sa gret mayne raucht him a dynt,
That nothyr hat, na helm, mycht stynt
The hevy dusche that he him gave,
That ner the heid till the harnys clave.
The hand-ax schaft fruschit in twa;
And he doune to the erd gan ga,
All flatlynys; for him faillyt mycht.
This wes the fryst strak off the fycht.

From the Bruce.

THE fictions of poetry have seldom exhibited any thing so tender, or so tragic, as the real history of James I. His elder brother having been murdered by a perfidious uncle, and his own life being menaced by the same infamous kinsman, he was sent at the early age of twelve years to France, that he might escape the threatened danger. But during the voyage, he was intercepted by Henry IV., although a truce at that time subsisted between Scotland and England, and doomed to perpetual captivity, in consequence of which his aged father died broken-hearted. Although the English sovereign had thus violated the law of nations, and with such gratuitous cruelty, he caused the education of the royal boy to be carefully attended to, and James made such proficiency in every branch of learning, as well as graceful accomplishments, as left little to be regretted on the score of his captivity. His prison of Windsor Castle also became his happy home in consequence of that bright vision which he saw, and which he has described in such glowing language in the following verses. When the English court at last agreed to liberate the prince, and restore him to the throne of his disturbed country, this conciliatory measure was finally confirmed by the marriage of James with the beautiful Jane Beaufort, daughter of the duke of Somerset, the lady upon whose charms he had brooded with such delight during his imprisonment. It was unfortunate that, as king of Scotland, his character was too refined, and his measures too much in advance of the age, to be agreeable to the half savage nobility by whom he was surrounded; and he fell the victim of their resentment, by assassination, on the 20th of February, 1437, in the forty-fourth year of his age, after having reigned fourteen years. As a poet, it is enough to say that he was not only the contemporary, but perhaps even the equal, of Chaucer, whose happiest productions have not surpassed the principal work of James, called The King's Quair.

JANE BEAUFORT.

And therewith kest I down myn eye ageyne,
  Quhare as I saw walkyng under the Toure,
Full secretly, new cumyn hir to pleyne
  The fairest or the freschest young floure
That ever I sawe, methoght, before that houre;
  For which sodayne abate, anon astert,
  The blude of all my body to my hert.

And though I stood abaisit tho a lyte,
  No wonder was; for quhy? my wittis all
Were so ouercome with plesance and delyte,
  Only through latting of myn eyen fall,
That sudaynly my hert became hir thrall,
  For ever of free wyll, for of manace
  There was no takyn in hir suete face.

And in my hede I drew ryt hastily,
  And eft sones I lent it out ageyne,
And saw hir walk that verray womanly,
  With no wight mo, bot only women tueyne:
Than gan I studye in myself and seyne,
  "Ah, suete! are ye a warldly creature,
  Or hevingly thing in likenesse of nature?

Or are ye god Cupidis owin princesse,
And cumin are to louse me out of band?
Or are ye veray Nature the goddesse,
That have depayntit with your hevinly hand
This gardin full of flouris, as they stand?
Quhat saal I think, allace! quhat reverence
Sall I mester to your excellence?

Giff ye a goddesse be, and that ye like
To do me payne, I may it not astert;
Giff ye be warldly wight, that dooth me sike,
Quhy lest God mak you so my derest hert
To do a sely prisoner thus smert,
That lufis you all, and wote of noucht but wo,
Aud, therefore, merci suete, sen it is so."

Quhen I a lytill thrawe had maid my mone,
Bewailing myn infortune and my chance,
Unknawin how or quhat was best to done,
So ferre I fallying into lufis dance,
That sodeynly my wit, my contenance,
My hert, my will, my nature, and my mynd,
Was changit clene ryght in ane other kind.

Of hir array the form gif I sal write,
Toward hir goldin haire, and rich atyre,
In fretwise couchit with perlis quhite,
And grete balas lemyng as the fyre,
With mony an emerant and faire saphire,
And on hir hede a chaplet fresch of hewe,
Of plumys partit rede, and quhite, and blewe.

Full or quaking spangis bricht as gold,
Forgit of schap like to the amorettis,
So new, so fresch, so pleasant to behold,
The plumys eke like to the floure jonettis,
And other of schap, like to the floure jonettis;
And, above all this, there was, wele I wote,
Beautee eneuch to mak a world to dote.

About hir neck, quhite as the fyre amaille,
A gudelie cheyne of small orfeverye,
Quhare by there hang a ruby, without faille
Like to ane hert schapin verily,
That, as a sperk of lowe so wantonly
Semyt birnyng upon hir quhite throte,
Now gif there was gud pertye, God it wrote.

From the King's Quair.

THIS personage is better known in his native Scotland by the title of Blind Harry, for it appears that he was actually blind. No poet, however, has exercised a greater influence upon a national character than this sightless wanderer. His Wallace, a rude Epic in eleven books, familiarised the minds of his countrymen to the idea of successful resistance to England, and animated their efforts, like the spirit-stirring notes of a war-trumpet; and even when his language had become obsolete, the work, in a modernised form, was and is still to be found in every Scottish cottage. Pinkerton has supposed that A.D. 1470 may be taken as the date when he appeared in the character of an author.

INTERVIEW BETWEEN WALLACE AND BRUCE AFTER THE BATTLE OF FALKIRK.

Wallace commaundyt his ost tharfor to byd;
Hys ten he tuk, for to meit Bruce thai ryd.
Sowthwest he past, quhar at the tryst was set;
The Bruce full son and gud Wallace is met.
For loss off Graym, and als for proper teyn,
He grewyt in ire, quhen he the Bruce had seyn.
Thar salusying was bot boustous and thrawin.
"Rewis thow," he said, "thow art contrar thin awin?"
"Wallace," said Bruce, "rabut me now no mar:
Myn awin dedis has bet me wondyr sar."
Quhen Wallace hard with Bruce that it stud sua,
On kneis he fell, far contenans cae him ma.
In armes son the Bruce has Wallace tane;
Out fra thair men in consalle ar thai gane.
I can nocht tell perfytly thair langage;
Bot this was it thair men had off knawlage:
Wallace him prayet; "Cum fra yon Sotheroun
The Bruce said; "Nay, thar lattis me a thing.
I am so boundyn with wytnes to be leill,
For all Ingland I wold nocht fals my seill.
Bot off a thing, I hecht to God and the,
That contrair Scottis agayn I sall nocht be;
In till a feild, with wappynnys that I ber,
In thi porpos I sall the nevir der.
Gyff God grantis off us ourhand till haiff,
I will bot fle myn awin selff for to saiff;
And Edward chaip, I pass with him agayn,
But I throu force be other tane or slayn.
Brek he on me; kuhen that my term is out,
I cum to the, may I chaip fra that dout."
Off thair consaill I can tell yow no mar;
The Bruce tuk leyff, and cam till Eduuard fayr,
Rycht sad in mynd for Scottis men that war lost,
Wallace in haist providyt son his ost.

From Wallace.

Of this Scottish poet nothing can be ascertained, except that he was a schoolmaster in Dunfermline. His chief poems are, The Testament of Cresseid, and an amusing popular ballad in dialogue entitled Robene and Makyne. His birth is dated A.D. 1425, and his death at 1495; but for this there is no authority, except mere conjecture. It is unfortunate, in the early poetry both of England and Scotland, that not only the era of some of the best poets is unknown, but that several distinguished pieces cannot be assigned to any particular author. Such was the uncertainty of intellectual reputation even during the first age of printing!

DESCRIPTION OF JUPITER AND MARS IN CRESSEID'S VISION.

Than Juppiter richt fair and amiabill,
God of the starris in the firmament,
And neureis to all thing generabill;
Fra his father Saturne far different,
With burelie face, and browis bricht and brent;
Upon his heid ane garland wonder gay,
Of flouris fair as it had bene in May.

His voice was cleir, as christal wer his ene,
As golden wyre so glitterand was his hair;
His garmound and his gyis full of grene,
With golden listis gilt on everie gair.
Ane burelie brand about his middill bair;
In his richt hand he had ane groundin spier,
Of his father the wraith fra us to weir.

Nixt efter him came Mars the god of ire,
Of strife, debait, and all dissensioun;
To chide, and fecht als fiers as ony fyre,
In hard harnes, hewmound, and habirgeoun;
And on his hanche ane roustie fell fachion,
And in his hand he had ane roustie sword;
Wrything his face with mony angrie word.

Schaikand his sword befoir Cupide he come,
With reid visage, and grislie glowr, and ene;
And at his mouth ane bullar stude of fome;
Lyke to ane bair quhetting his tuskis kene.
Richt Tuilyeour lyke, but temperance in tene,
Ane horne he blew with mony bosteous brag,
Quhilk all this warld with weir hes maid to wag.

From the Testament of Cresseid.

DUNBAR, one of the most eminent of the ancient Scottish poets, was born, as is supposed, about the year 1465, at Salton in East Lothian. He became a travelling novice of the Franciscan order, and in this capacity visited several parts of England and France. At what time he resigned this vocation we know not; but the latter part of his life was spent in his native country, where he died at an advanced age, about the year 1530. His poems, which are chiefly of a moral and didactic character, are remarkable for their fancy, originality, and harmony of versification. His principal pieces are, The Thrissil (Thistle) and the Rose, which was written on the nuptials of James IV. with Margaret, eldest daughter of Henry VII., in 1504; and The Golden Targe. The following specimen will exhibit a melody of language, as well as a richness of versification, which we may seek for in vain among the poets of this age.

SONGS TO THE ROSE.

A costly crown, with clarefeid stonis bricht,
This cumly Quene did on hir heid inclose,
Quhylk all the land illumynit of the lycht;
Quhairfoir methocht the flouris did rejose,
Crying, attanis, "Haill be thou richest Rose,
Haill hairbis Empryce, haill freschest Quene of flouris,
To thee be glory and honour at all houris!"

Thane all the birdis song with voice on hicht,
Quhois mirthfull soun was marvellus to heir;
The mavis sang, "Hail Rose most riche and richt,
That dois upflureiss under Phebus speir!
Haill plant of youth, haill prince's dochter deir,
Haill blosome breking out of the blud royall,
Quhois pretius vertew is imperial."

The merle scho sang, "Haill Rose of most delyt,
Haill of all fluris quene and soverane."
The lark scho sang, "Haill Rose both reid and quhyt,
Most pleasant flour, of michty colours twane."
The nichtingaill sang, "Haill Naturis suffragene
In bewty, nurtour, and every nobilness,
In riche array, renown, and gentilness."

The common voce upraise of burdis small
Upon this wys, "O blissit be the hour
That thou wes chosen to be our principall;
Welcome to be our Princes of honour,
Our perle, our plesans, and our paramour,
Our peace, our play, our plane felicite;
Christ thee conserf from all adversite."

From the Thrissil and the Rose.

GAWIN or GAVIN DOUGLAS was the third son of Archibald, 5th earl of Angus, and was born at Brechin, in Scotland, in 1474. In 1515, he was nominated to the bishoprick of Dunkeld; but his life was vexed with those numerous feuds in which, as a member of the overgrown house of Douglas, he was involuntarily involved. He took refuge in England, and died in London of the plague in 1522. He wrote several poetical pieces of distinguished merit; but his chief labour was a translation of the Æneid of Virgil. To each book he prefixed a prologue abounding in great originality of thought and beauty of expression. The translation itself is remarkable for power and fidelity.

A WINTER MORNING.

The sary gled quhissils with mony ane pew,
Quharby the day was dawing wele I knew;
Bad bete the fyre, and the candyll alicht,
Syne blissit me, and in my wedis dicht;
Ane schot wyndo unschet ane litel on char,
Persavit the mornyng bla, wan, and har
Wyth cloudy gum and rak ouerquhelmyt the are.
The sulze stiche, hasard, rouch and hare;
Branchis brattlying, and blaiknyt schew the brayis,
With hirstis harsk of waggand wyndit strayis.
The dew droppis congelit on stibbil and rynd,
And scharp hailstanys mortfundyit of kind,
Hoppand on the thak and on the causay by.
The schote I closit, and drew inwart in hy,
Cheverand for cald, the sessoun was sa snell,
Schupe with hait flambis to fleme the fresing fell.

From the Prologue to the VIIth book of the Æneid.

SONG OF THE BIRDS TO THE SUN.

Welcum the lord of licht, and lampe of day;
Welcum fosterare of tender herbis grene;
Welcum quhikkinnar of flurist flouris schene;
Welcum support of every rute and vane;
Welcum comfort of al kind frute and grane;
Welcum the birdis beild apoun the brere;
Welcum maister, and reulare of the yere;
Welcum welefare of husbandis at the plewis;
Welcum reparare of woddis, treis, and bewis;
Welcum depaynter of the blomyt medis;
Welcum the lyffe of every thing that spreddis;
Welcum storare of all kynd bestial;
Welcum be thy bricht bemes gladand al.

From the Prologue to the XIIth book of the Æneid.

This accomplished monarch was the son of James IV., who perished so miserably at Flodden, and was born at Linlithgow in April, 1512. His popular and winning manners, and the frankness with which he associated with all ranks, procured for him from his people the title of 'King of the Commons.' For the purpose of diversion, as well as from motives of policy, he frequently went about disguised, on which occasions the society into which he was frequently thrown, and the adventures he underwent, may be surmised from his two principal poems, Chrystis Kirk on the Green, and the Gaberlunzie Man. In the first of these poems, he ridicules with much sly humour the inferiority of his subjects in Archery, a disqualification which he endeavoured to amend by statutes, as well as poetical satire. He died broken-hearted on the 13th of of Dec. 1542, in consequence of the shameful rout of his army at Solway.

A RUSTIC COQUETTE.

Sche scornit Jok, and scrippit at him,
And morgeound him with mokkis;
He wald have luffit hir, sche wald not let him;
For all his yallow locks:
He cherist hir, scha bad ga chat him,
Sche comptit him nocht twa clokkis,
Schamfullie ane schort goun sat him,
His lymmis was lyk twa rokkis
Sche said
At Chrystis kirk on the grene.

A COWARD.

Then Lowry as ane lyon lap,
And sone a flane can feddir,
He hecht to perss him at the pap,
Theron to wed a weddir;
He hit him on the wame a wap;
It buft lyk ony bledder,
But sua his fortune was and hap
His doublit wes maid of ledder,
And saift him
At Chrystis kirk on the grene.

The buff so boisterously abaift him
That he to the eard dusht doun;
The uther man for deid then left him
And fled out of the toune:
The wyves cam furth, and up they reft him,
And fand lyfe in the loune;
Then with three routis up they reft him,
And cur'd him of his soune
Fra hand that day
At Chryttis kirk on the grene.

Sir David Lyndsay held the office of Lion King at Arms under James V., and was the esteemed friend, as well as faithful servant, of that poetical sovereign. He was born probably about the year 1490, and received his education at the university of St. Andrew's; after which he entered into public life, and bore a considerable part in the negotiations of the Scottish court with England, and other countries. The chief subjects of Lyndsay's poetry are the abuses that had crept into religion, and the vices of the Scottish clergy, whom he lashed with such unsparing severity, as well as truth, that the public mind was roused to inquiry by his writings, and prepared for the advent of the Reformation. Few poets have enjoyed such a national reputation as Sir David. His verses were circulated through every cottage and castle, and only ceased to be read when the language in which they were written had become in a great measure obsolete. The exact period of his death is uncertain, but it was probably near 1557.

LAMENT FOR JAMES IV. OF SCOTLAND.

During his tyme, sa justice did prevaill,
The savage iles trymblit for terrour:
Eskdale, Evisdale, Liddisdale, and Annandale,
Durst nocht rebell, douting his dintis dour;
And of his lordis had sic perfyte favour
So for to schaw, that he affeirit not ane;
Out throuch his realme, he wald ryde him allane.

And of his court throuch Europe sprang the fame
Of lustie lords, and lufesum ladyis ying;
Tryumphand tornayis, justing, and knichtly game,
With all pastime according for ane king.
He wes the glore of princelie governing,
Quhilk throuch the ardent lufe he had to France,
Again England did move his ordinance.

Of Floddoun feild the rewyne to revolve,
Or that maist dolent day for till deplore,
I nyll, for dreid that dolour yow dissolve,
Schaw quhow that prince in his triumphand glore
Distroyit was; quhat neidith proces more?
Nocht be the vertue of Inglis ordinance,
But be his awin wilfull misgoverannce.

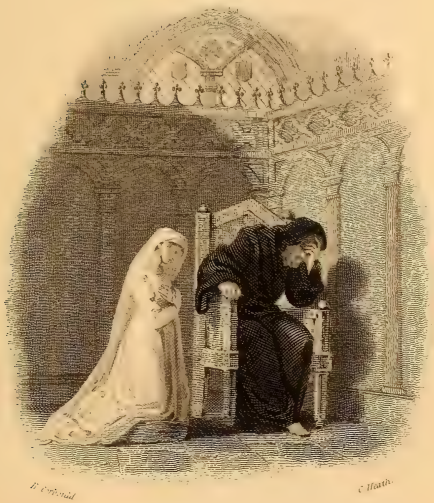
Allace! that day had he bane counsolabill,
He had obtenit laud, glore, and victorie;
Quhose piteous proces bene sa lamentabill,
I nyll at lenth it put in memorie.
I never red in tragedie, nor storie,
At ane tornay sa mony nobillis slane,
For the defence, and lufe of thair soverane.

From The Complaynt of Papingo.

THE CONFESSIONAL RIDICULED.

He me absolvit for ane plak,
Thocht he na pryce with me wald mak;
And mekil Latyne he did mummill,
I hard na thing bot hummill bummill.
He schew me nocht of Goddis word,
Quhilk scharper is than ony sword;
He counsalit me nocht till abstene,
And lead ane haly lyfe, and clene:
Of Christis blude na thing he knew,
Nor of his promissis full trew,
That safis all that will beleve,
That Satan sall us never greve.
He techit me nocht for till traist,
The comfort of the Haly Gaist:
He bad me nocht to Christ be kynd;
To keip his law with hart and mynd,
And lufe, and thank his greit mercie,
Fra sin and hell that savit me;
And lufe my nichtbour as my sell,—
Of this na thing he could me tell.

From Kittel's Confession.



SIR THOMAS WYATT was born at Allington Castle in Kent, in 1503, and was the father of the person of the same name who was beheaded for rebellion in the reign of Queen Mary, and with whom he has been sometimes confounded. Sir Thomas was a favoured courtier, and one of the brightest ornaments of the court of Henry VIII., where congeniality of taste and disposition united him in close friendship to the noble and accomplished Earl of Surrey. A romantic, and possibly a true, report was prevalent, that the object of Wyatt's youthful affection was the beautiful Anne Boleyn, who forsook him for the deceitful allurements of a crown; and we know, that when she became the object of calumny and persecution, it was whispered that he was one of the favoured lovers. Notwithstanding this report he still continued to enjoy the royal favour, and was repeatedly employed in honourable and important embassies. Sir Thomas Wyatt died in 1542, in the thirty-ninth year of his age.

THE LADY TO AUNSWERE DIRECTLY WITH YEA OR NAY.

Madame, withouten many woordes,
  Once, I am sure, you will or no:
And if you will, then leave your boordes,
  And use your wit, and shew it so.

For with a beck you shall me call;
  And if of ane, that burnes alwaye
Ye have pitie, or ruth at all,
  Aunswere him faire with yea, or nay.
If it be nay, frendes as before,
  You shall an other man obtayne,
And I myne own, and yours no more.

A RENOUNCING OF LOVE.

Farewell love, and all thy lawes for ever,
  Thy bated hookes shall tangle me no more;
Seneca and Plato call me from thy lore,
  To parfit welth my witt for to endever.
In blind errour when I did persever,
  Thy sharp repulse that pricketh aye so sore,
Taught me in trifles that I set noe store,
  But scape forth thence, since libertie is leiffer.
Therefore, farewell! go, trouble younger harts,
  And in time claim noe more auctoritie:
With idle youth goe use thy propertie,
  And thereon spend thy many brittle darts.
For hitherto, though I have lost my time,
Me list no longer rotten bowes to clime.

HENRY HOWARD, Earl of Surrey, the friend of Wyatt, and the lover of Geraldine, has been frequently confounded with that Earl of Surrey who gained the victory of Flodden. The noble poet was born about 1516, three years after the battle took place. Another popular mistake makes him a wandering knight-errant through Italy, to uphold the superiority of his fair Geraldine with sword and lance. The Earl was more honourably and usefully employed in the wars of Henry VIII. with France, in which, with his father, the Duke of Norfolk, he held a principal command. The end of the noble Surrey was truly tragic. Having fallen under the suspicion of his tyrannical sovereign, he was tried and condemned upon a groundless charge of high treason, and beheaded on Tower Hill in 1546, when he was only in his thirty-first year. His works were a Collection of Songes and Sonnettes, a translation of Solomon's Ecclesiastes, and a few of the Psalms of David into rhyme, and portions of the Second and Fourth Books of the Æneid.

DESCRIPTION AND PRAISE OF HIS LOVE, GERALDINE.

From Tuscane came my ladies worthy race;
Faire Florence was, sometyme, her auncient seat;
The western yle whose pleasant shore doth face
Wild Camber's cliff, did geve her lyvely heate.
Foster'd she was with milke of Irishe breste;
Her sire, an Erle; her dame of princes' blood:
From tender yeres in Britaine she doth rest,
With kinges childe, where she tasteth costly food.
Honsdon did first present her to myne eyne;
Bright is her hewe, and Geraldine she hight;
Hampton me taught to wish her first for mine,
And Windsor, alas! doth chase me from her sight.
Her beauty of kinde, her vertue from above,
Happy is he that can obtain her love.

DESCRIPTION OF SPRING, WHEREIN ECHE THING RENEWES, SAVE ONLY THE LOVER.

The soote season that bud and bloome fourth bringes,
With grene hath cladde the hyll, and eke the vale;
The nightingall, with fethers new, she singes;
The turtle too her mate hath told her tale.
Somer is come; for every spray now springes;
The hart hath hung hys olde head on the pale;
The bucke, in brake his winter coate he flynges;
The fishes flete with new repayred scale;
The adder, all her slough away she flynges;
The swift swallow pursueth the flyes smalle;
The busy bee, her honey how she mynges;
Winter is worn, that was the floures bale.
And thus I see, among these pleasant thynges,
Eche care decayes, and yet my sorrow sprynges.

Much conjecture has been exercised in reference to the identity of this noble bard; but it is now generally believed that he was Thomas, Lord Vaux of Harrowden, in Northamptonshire, and son of Lord Nicholas, first baron of that title, with whom he has been sometimes confounded. He sat in parliament in 1531, and lived till the end of the reign of Queen Mary. His poems, which are of a miscellaneous nature, are to be found in Tottel's Collection, and the Paradise of Dainty Devices. His poem of 'I loath that I did love,' must be interesting to the readers of Shakspeare, from the circumstance of three stanzas being quoted in the play of Hamlet, by the Grave-digger.

THE AGED LOVER RENOUNCETH LOVE.

I loath that I did love
In youth that I thought sweet;
As time requires for my behove,
Methinks they are not meet.

My lusts they do me leave,
My fancies all be fled;
And tract of time begins to weave
Grey hairs upon my head.

For Age with stealing steps
Hath claw'd me with his crutch;
And lusty life away she leaps,
As there had been none such.

My Muse doth not delight
Me, as she did before:
My hand and pen are not in plight
As they have been of yore.

For Reason me denies
This youthly idle Rhyme;
And day by day to me she cries,
"Leave off these toys in time."

The wrinkles in my brow,
The furrows in my face,
Say, "Limping Age will hedge him now
Where youth must give him place."

The harbinger of Death
To me I see him ride:
The cough, the cold, the gasping breath,
Doth bid me to provide

A pick-axe, and a spade,
And eke a shrouding sheet,
A house of clay for to be made
For such a guest most meet.

Methinks I hear the clerk,
That knolls the careful knell;
And bids me leave my woful wark
Ere Nature me compel.

My keepers knit the knot
That Youth did laugh to scorn;
Of me that clean shall be forgot,
As I had not been born.

Thus must I Youth give up,
Whose badge I long did wear:
To them I yield the wanton cup
That better may it bear.

Lo, here the bared scull,
By whose bald sign I know
That stooping Age away shall pull
Which youthful years did sow.

For Beauty with her band
These crooked cares hath wrought,
And shipped me into the land
From whence I first was brought.

And ye that bide behind,
Have ye none other trust:
As ye of clay were cast by kind,
So shall ye waste to dust.



This poet was a native of Huntingdonshire, but the date of his birth is unknown. He was chaplain to Bishop Ridley, and would perhaps have suffered martyrdom with his patron during the persecution in the reign of Queen Mary, had he not sought inglorious safety by a recantation. He died about 1563. Grimoald's poetry is remarkable for elegance of language, and smoothness of versification; and it is worthy of remark, that he was the first poet, after Lord Surrey, who attempted English blank verse.

DEATH OF CICERO.

When he afar the men approach he spieth,
And of his foen the ensign doth aknow;

* * * * * * * *

"The chariot turn," saith he; "let loose the reins;
Run to the undeserved death; me, lo,
Hath Phœbus' fowl, as messenger forewarn'd,
And Jove desires a new heaven's-man to make.
Brutus' and Cassius' souls, live you in bliss?
In case yet all the Fates gainstrive us not
Neither shall we, perchance, die unrevenged.
Now have I lived, O Rome, enough for me:
My passed life nought suffereth me to doubt
Noisome oblivion of the loathsome death.
Slay me; yet all th' offspring to come shall know,
And this decease shall bring eternal life.
Yea, and (unless I fail, and all in vain,
Rome, I sometime thy Augur chosen was,)
Not evermore shall friendly fortune thee
Favour, Antonius. Once the day shall come
When her dear wights, by cruel spite thus slain,
Victorious Rome shall at thy hands require.
Melikes, therewhile, go see the hoped heaven."
Speech had he left, and therewith he, good man,
His throat prepared, and held his head unmoved.
His hasting to those fates the very knights
Be loth to see, and rage rebated when
They his bare neck beheld, and his hoar hairs:
Scant could they hold the tears that forth gan burst,
And almost fell from bloody hands the swords.
Only the stern Herennius with grim look,
"Dastards, why stand you still?" he saith, and straight
Swaps off the head with his presumptuous iron.

*

THIS poet, who is justly entitled by Pinkerton, the 'Anacreon of old Scottish poetry,' has scarcely left a trace of his personal history. It appears that he commenced his authorship about the year 1550, and several of his poems, which are distinguished by correctness and elegance of versification, and justness of sentiment, are to be found in Lord Hailes's Collection, and the Bannatyne MS.

LAMENT WHEN HIS WIFE LEFT HIM.

To love unloved it is a pain;
For she that is my sovereign,
  Some wanton man so high has set her,
That I can get no love again,
  But break my heart, and nought the better.

When that I went with that sweet may
To dance, to sing, to sport, and play,
  And oft-times in my armis plet her—
I do now mourn both night and day,
  And break my heart, and nought the better.

Where I was wont to see her go,
Right timely pass to and fro,
  With comely smiles when that I met her—
And now I live in pain and wo,
  And break my heart, and nought the better.

What an ane glaikit fool am I
To slay myself with melancholy,
  Sen weill I ken I may not get her!
Or what should be the cause, and why,
  To break my heart, and nought the better?

My heart, sen than may not her please,
Adieu; as good love comes as gais;
  Go, choose another, and forget her.
God give him dolour and disease,
  That breaks his heart, and nought the better.

THIS accomplished scholar, poet, courtier, and soldier, was born in 1554; and during the short period of his life few were so greatly or so generally endeared to society by talent and worth as the author of the Arcadia, by which work he was chiefly distinguished in his own day. The principal poetry of Sir Philip Sidney is his Astrophel and Stella, comprising a collection of sonnets addressed to the lady to whom he gave the latter appellation. His death at Zutphen in 1586, when he had only reached his thirty-second year, and the heroic circumstances with which it was accompanied, are too generally known to require further mention.

TO THE MOON.

With how sad steps, O Moon! thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What! may it be, that, ev'n in heavenly place,
That busy Archer his sharp arrows tries?
Sure, if that long, with Love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of Love, thou feel'st a lover's case;
I read it in thy looks; thy languish'd grace
To me, that feel the like, thy state descries.

Then ev'n of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deem'd there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be loved, and yet
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call virtue there ungratefulness?

From Astrophel and Stella.

TO STELLA.

No more, my dear, no more these counsels try,
O give my passions leave to run their race;
Let Fortune lay on me her worst disgrace:
Let folk o'ercharged with brain against me cry;
Let clouds be dim, my face break in mine eye;
Let me no steps then of lost labour trace:
Let all the earth with scorn recount my case,
But do not will me from my love to fly.

I do not envy Aristotle's wit,
Nor do aspire to Cæsar's bleeding fame;
Nor aught do care, though some above me sit:
Nor hope, nor wish, another course to frame,
But that which once may win thy cruel heart:—
Thou art my Wit, and thou my Virtue art.

From Astrophel and Stella.

THOMAS SACKVILLE, Earl of Dorset, was born in Sussex, in 1536. His first work was the tragedy of Gorboduc, which he composed while a student of the Inner Temple, and the title of which was afterwards changed into Ferrex and Porrex. In addition to this, he contributed the Induction and Legend of the Duke of Buckingham, to the Mirror for Magistrates. After having been employed in several foreign negotiations, he was raised to the office of Lord High Treasurer, on the death of Burghley. The earl died suddenly at the council table at 1608.

REMORSE.

And first within the porch and jaws of Hell
Sat deep Remorse of Conscience, all besprent
With tears; and to herself oft would she tell
Her wretchedness, and cursing never stent
To sob and sigh; but ever thus lament
With thoughtful care, as she that all in vain
Would wear and waste continually in pain.

Her eyes unstedfast, rolling here and there,
Whirl'd on each place, as place that vengeance brought,
So was her mind continually in fear,
Toss'd and tormented by the tedious thought
Of those detested crimes which she had wrought:
With dreadful cheer and looks thrown to the sky,
Wishing for death, and yet she could not die.

OLD AGE.

And next in order sad Old Age we found,
His beard all hoar, his eyes hollow and blind;
With drooping cheer still poring on the ground,
As on the place where Nature him assign'd
To rest, when that the sisters had entwined
His vital thread, and ended with their knife
The fleeting course of fast declining life.

Crook'd-back'd he was, tooth-shaken, and blear-eyed,
Went on three feet, and sometime crept on four;
With old lame bones that rattled by his side,
His scalp all pill'd, and he with eld forlore,
His wither'd fist still knocking at Death's door;
Trembling and driv'ling as he draws his breath,
For brief, the shape and messenger of Death.

This English poet, incomparably the best that had appeared since the days of Chaucer, was born in London in East Smithfield, near the Tower, about the year 1553. He received his education at the university of Cambridge, where he formed an intimate acquaintanceship with Gabriel Harvey, one who was so wedded to the poetry of Greece and Rome, that he conceived the possibility of reducing English versification to the old classical quantities. Under this wrong-headed friend, Spenser commenced his poetical career very inauspiciously, by attempting English trimeter iambics; but he soon emancipated himself from these impracticable trammels, and became the poet of truth and nature. Harvey rendered our bard a more judicious service when he counselled him to leave his obscure situation, and gave him an introduction to Sir Philip Sidney, by whom he was recommended to the powerful Earl of Leicester. While residing at the habitation of Sir Philip, at Penshurst, Spenser produced his Shepherd's Calendar, which enjoyed a high popularity. Notwithstanding its intrinsic poetical merit, however, the pedantic style and far-fetched allusions of the Shepherds of this work, and the immeasurably superior attractiveness of the Faery Queen, have thrown it entirely into the shade, so that it is no longer quoted, and scarcely at all remembered.

In 1580, Lord Grey of Wilton being appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Spenser accompanied him thither as secretary; but two years afterwards he returned to England, in consequence of the recall of his patron. By the kind mediation of his powerful friends, however, he received from Queen Elizabeth a grant of 3028 acres of land in Cork, in consequence of which he was bound to reside in that country, and cultivate the lands that had been assigned to him. His habitation in Ireland was an ancient castle at Kilcolman, that had belonged to the earls of Desmond, and was surrounded by rich and magnificent scenery; and in this place, so fitted for study and meditation, an event occurred that ought to be dear to the recollections of every lover of English literature. He was visited by Sir Walter Raleigh, at that time a captain in the queen's army, and the result of the conferences of two such congenial minds, was the resolution of Spenser to prepare the first part of the Faery Queen for publication. This measure occasioned his temporary return to London, after an absence of four years; and on his arrival he published the three first books of his celebrated work. This occurred in 1590; and about four years afterward, when his fame had attained its most palmy state, he married at Cork a country maiden of humble birth. During the six following years, he occasionally revisited England, and published portions of the Faery Queen, and other poetical productions, besides a very able political sketch on the condition of Ireland.

But dark misfortunes clouded the latter days of this talented and noble-hearted poet. In 1597, he returned for the last time to Ireland, and almost immediately after his arrival, the rebellion under Tyrone broke out. The insurgents advanced towards Kilcolman, upon which Spenser fled with his family; but one of his children, who was left behind in the confusion, perished in the destruction of the castle, which was set on fire by the rebels. Spenser returned to London an impoverished and heart-broken fugitive, and died in 1598, in a state of considerable destitution. No poet of England, or perhaps any other country, has equalled Spenser in richness of fancy, and few have equalled him in those other essentials that constitute a great poet. His Faery Queen is a mine of thoughts and descriptions which the most laborious reading cannot exhaust; and whether it be perused as a literal tale of romance, or a moral allegory, it is always sure to afford instruction and delight. His personages, also, besides being correct allegorical characters, are invested with such attributes of real life, that we imagine not only their separate identity, but we know also every individual, from the blazonry upon his shield, to the rivets in his armour. We trust the time is not distant when the public taste will revive the writings of Spenser with a popularity greater than they have ever yet enjoyed.



SPENSER.

ENCOUNTER OF ST. GEORGE WITH THE DRAGON.

With that they heard a roaring hideous sownd,
That all the ayre with terror filled wyde,
And seemd uneath to shake the stedfast ground.
Eftsoones that dreadful dragon they espyde,
Where strecht he lay upon the sunny side
Of a great hill, himselfe like a great hill;
But all so soone as he from far descryde
Those glistring armes, that heaven with light did fill,
He rousd himselfe full blyth, and hastned them untill.

The knight gan fayrely couch his steady speare,
And fiersely ran at him with rigorous might;
The pointed steele, arriving rudely theare,
His harder hyde would nether perce nor bight,

But glauncing by, foorth passed forward right:
Yet sore amoved with so puissaunt push,
The wrathfull beast about him turned light,
And him so rudely passing by did brush
With his long tayle, that horse and man to ground did rush.

Both horse and man up lightly rose againe,
And fresh encounter towardes him addrest;
But th' ydle stroke yet backe recoyld in vaine,
And found no place his deadly point to rest.
Exceeding rage enflam'd the furious beast,
To be avenged of so great despight;
For never felt his imperceable brest
So wondrous force from hand of living wight,
Yet had he prov'd the powre of many a puissant knight.

Then with his waving wings displayed wyde,
Himselfe up high he lifted from the ground,
And with strong flight did forcibly divyde
The yielding ayre, which nigh too feeble found
Her flitting parts, and element unsound,
To beare so greate a weight: he cutting way
With his broad sayles, about him soared round:
At last low stouping with unweldy sway,
Snatcht up both horse and man, to beare them quite away.

Long he them bore above the subject plaine,
So far as ewghen bow a shaft may send,
Till struggling strong did him at last constraine
To let them downe before his flightes end:
As hagard hauke presuming to contend
With hardy fowle, above his hable might,
His wearie pounces all in vaine doth spend
To trusse the prey too heavy for his flight,
Which coming down to ground, does free itselfe by fight.

He so disseized of his griping grosse,
The knight his thrillant speare againe assayd
In his bras-plated body to embosse,
And three mens strength into the stroake he layd,
Wherewith the stiffe beame quaked as affrayd,
And glauncing from his scaly necke, did glyde
Close under his left wing, then broad displayd,
The percing steele there wrought a wound full wyde,
That with the uncouth smart the monster lowdly cryde.

He cryde as raging seas are wont to rore,
When wintry storme his wrathful wreck does threat,
The roaling billows beat the ragged shore,
As they the earth would shoulder from her seat;
And greedy gulfe does gape, as he would eat
His neighbour element in his revenge;
Then gin the blustring brethren boldly threat
To move the world from off his stedfast henge,
And boystrous battaile make, each other to avenge.

THE BOWER OF BLISS.

And over him Art stryving to compayre
With Nature did an arber greene dispred,
Framed of wanton yvie, flouring fayre,
Through which the fragrant eglantine did spred
His prickling armes, entrayld with roses red,
Which daintie odours round about them threw;
And all within with flowres was garnished,
That when myld Zephyrus emongst them blew,
Did breath out bounteous smels, and painted colors shew.

And fast beside their trickled softly downe
A gentle streame, whose murmuring wave did play
Emongst the pumy stones, and made a sowne,
To lull him soft asleepe that by it lay:
The wearie traveller, wandring that way,
Therein did often quench his thirsty heat,
And then by it his wearie limbes display,
Whiles creeping slombre made him to forget
His former payne, and wypt away his toilsom sweat.

And on the other syde a pleasaunt grove
Was shott up high, full of the stately tree
That dedicated is t' Olympick Iove,
And to his sonne Alcides, whenas hee
In Nemus gayned goodly victoree:
Therein the merry birdes of every sorte
Chaunted alowd their chearfull harmonee,
And made emongst themselves a sweete consort,
That quickned the dull spright with musicall comfort.

ANGELIC GUARDIANSHIP.

And is there care in heaven? and is there love
In heavenly spirits to these creatures bace,
That may compassion of their evils move?
There is; else much more wretched were the cace,
Of men then beasts: but O th' exceeding grace
Of highest God! that loves his creatures so,
And all his workes with mercy doth embrace,
That blessed angels he sends to and fro
To serve to wicked man, to serve his wicked foe.

How oft do they their silver bowers leave
To come to succour us that succour want?
How oft do they with golden pineons cleave
The flitting skyes, like flying pursuivant,
Against fowle feendes to ayd us militant?
They for us fight, they watch and dewly ward,
And their bright squadrons round about us plant,
And all for love and nothing for reward:
O why should hevenly God to men have such regard?

COMBAT BETWEEN BLANDAMOUR AND PARIDELL.

Their firie steedes with so untamed forse
Did beare them both to fell avenge's end,
That both their speares with pitilesse remorse
Through shield, and mayle, and haberieon, did wend,
And in their flesh a griesly passage rend,
That with the furie of their owne affret
Each other horse and man to ground did send;
Where lying still awhile, both did forget
The perilous present stownd in which their lives were set.

As when two warlike brigandines at sea,
With murdrous weapons arm'd to cruell fight,
Do meete together on the watry lea,
They stemme ech other with so fell despight,
That with the shocke of their owne heedlesse might
Their wooden ribs are shaken nigh asonder;
They which from shore behold the dreadful sight
Of flashing fire, and heare the ordenance thonder,
Do greatly stand amazed at such unwonted wonder.

At length they both upstarted in amaze,
As men awaked rashly out of dreme,
And round about themselves awhile did gaze,
Till seeing her, that Florimell did seeme,
In doubt to whom she victorie should deeme,
Therewith their dulled sprights they edgd anew,
And drawing both their swords with rage extreme,
Like two mad mastiffes, each on other flew,
And shields did share, and mailes did rash, and helmes did hew.

So furiously each other did assayle,
As if their soules they would attonce have rent
Out of their brests, that streames of blood did rayle
Adowne, as if their springs of life were spent,
That all the ground with purple bloud was sprent
And all their armours staynd with bloudie gore;
Yet scarcely once to breath would they relent,
So mortall was their malice, and so sore,
Become of fayned friendship which they vow'd afore.

DESCRIPTION OF SIR CALIDORE.

Of court it seemes men courtesie doe call,
For that it there most useth to abound;
And well beseemeth that in princes hall
That vertue should be plentifully found,
Which of all goodly manners is the ground,
And roote of civill conversation:
Right so in Faery Court it did redound,
Where curteous knights and ladies most did won
Of all on earth, and made a matchlesse paragon:

But mongst them all was none more courteous knight
Then Calidore, beloved over all,
In whom it seemes that gentlenesse of spright
And manners mylde were planted naturall;
To which he adding comely guize withall,
And gracious speach, did steale mens hearts away:
Nathlesse thereto he was full stout and tall,
And well approved in batteilous affray,
That him did much renowme, and far his fame display.

Ne was there knight, ne was there lady found,
In Faery Court, but him did deare embrace
For his faire usage and conditions sound,
The which in all mens liking gayned place,
And with the greatest purchast greatest grace,
Which he could wisely use and well apply,
To please the best, and th' evill to embase;
For he loathd leasing and base flattery,
And loved simple truth and stedfast honesty.

SIR CALIDORE'S COURTSHIP OF PASTORELL.

So there that night Sir Calidore did dwell,
And long while after, whilest him list remaine,
Dayly beholding the fayre Pastorell,
And feeding on the bayt of his owne bane:
During which time he did her entertaine
With all kind courtesies he could invent,
And every day, her companie to gaine,
When to the field she went, he with her went;
So for to quench his fire he did it more augment.

But she, that never had acquainted beene
With such quient usage, fit for queens and kings,
Ne ever had such knightly service seene,
But being bred under base shepheards wings
Had ever learn'd to love the lowly things,
Did litle whit regard his courteous guize,
But cared more for Colin's carolings
Then all that he could doe or ev'r devize:
His layes, his loves, his lookes, she did them all despize.

Which Calidore perceiving, thought it best
To chaunge the manner of his loftie looke,
And doffing his bright armes, himselfe addrest
In shepheard's weed; and in his hand he tooke,
Instead of steele-head speare, a shepheard's hooke;
That who had seene him then, would have bethought
On Phrygian Paris by Plexippus brooke,
When he the love of fayre Œnone sought,
What time the golden apple was unto him brought.

So being clad, unto the fields he went
With the faire Pastorella every day,
And keept her sheepe with diligent attent,
Watching to drive the ravenous wolfe away,
The whylest at pleasure she mote sport and play,
And every evening helping them to fold;
And otherwhiles for need he did assay
In his strong hand their rugged teats to hold,
And out of them to presse the milke; love so much could.

Which seeing, Coridon, who her likewise
Long time had loved, and hoped her love to gaine,
He much was troubled at that straunger's guize,
And many gealous thoughts conceived in vaine,
That this of all his labour and long paine
Should reape the harvest ere it ripen'd were,
That made him scoule, and pout, and oft complaine
Of Pastorell to all the shepheards there,
That she did love a straunger swayne then him more dere.

And ever when he came in companie,
Where Calidore was present, he would loure,
And byte his lip, and even for gealousie
Was readie oft his owne hart to devoure,
Impatient of any paramoure;
Who on the other side did seeme so farre
From malicing or grudging his good houre,
That all he could he graced him with her,
Ne ever shewed signe of rancour or of iarre.

And oft, when Coridon unto her brought
Or little sparrowes stolen from their nest,
Or wanton squirrils in the woods farre sought,
Or other daintie thing for her addrest,
He would commend his guift, and make the best;
Yet she no whit his presents did regard,
Ne him could find to fancie in her brest;
This new-come shepheard had his market mard:
Old love is little worth when new is more prefard.

One day whenas the shepheard swaynes together
Were met, to make their sports and merry glee,
As they are wont in faire sunshyne weather,
The whiles their flockes in shadowes shrouded bee,

They fell to daunce; then did they all agree
That Colin Clout should pipe, as one most fit,
And Calidore should lead the ring, as hee
That most in Pastorellaes grace did sit;
Thereat frown'd Coridon, and his lip closely bit.

But Calidore, of courteous inclination,
Tooke Coridon, and set him in his place,
That he should lead the daunce, as was his fashion;
For Coridon could daunce, and trimly trace;
And whenas Pastorella, him to grace,
Her flowry garlond tooke from her owne head,
And plast on his, he did it soone displace,
And did it put on Coridon's instead;
Then Coridon woxe frollicke, that erst seemed dead.

Another time, whenas they did dispose
To practise games and maisteries to try,
They for their iudge did Pastorella chose,
A garland was the meed of victory;
There Coridon forth stepping, openly
Did chalenge Calidore to wrestling game,
For he through long and perfect industry
Therrin well practised was, and in the same
Thought sure t' avenge his grudge, and worke his foe great shame.

But Calidore he greatly did mistake:
For he was strong and mightily stiffe pight,
That with one fall his neck he almost brake,
And had he not upon him fallen light,
His dearest ioynt he sure had broken quight.
Then was the oaken crowne by Pastorell
Given to Calidore as his due right;
But he, that did in courtesie excell,
Gave it to Coridon, and said he wonne it well.

Thus did the gentle knight himselfe abeare
Amongst that rusticke rout in all his deeds,
That even they, the which his rivals were,
Could not maligne him, but commend him needs:
For courtesie amongst the rudest breeds
Good will and favour; so it surely wrought
With this fayre mayd, and in her mynde the seeds
Of perfect love did sow, that last forth brought
The fruite of ioy and blisse, though long time dearely bought.

THE history of this noble, accomplished, and ill-requited personage, is too well known to require repetition. He was born at Hayes Farm, in Devonshire, in 1552, and fell a victim to the mean jealousy of James I., by whose sentence he was beheaded on the 29th of October, 1618. The superior reputation of Sir Walter Raleigh as a scholar, philosopher, and enterprising navigator, has eclipsed his reputation as a poet, although his verses alone would have procured him distinction among his contemporaries. It is unfortunate that his fugitive pieces, which are scattered among the uncertain poetry of the period, cannot always be identified.

HIS LOVE ADMITS NO RIVAL.

Shall I, like a hermit, dwell
On a rock, or in a cell,
Calling home the smallest part
That is missing of my heart,
To bestow it where I may
Meet a rival every day?
If she undervalue me,
What care I how fair she be?

Were her tresses angel gold,
If a stranger may be bold,
Unrebuked, unafraid,
To convert them to a braid,
And with little more ado
Work them into bracelets, too!
If the mine be grown so free,
What care I how rich it be?

Were her hand as rich a prize
As her hairs, or precious eyes,
If she lay them out to take
Kisses, for good manners' sake:
And let every lover skip
From her hand unto her lip;
If she seem not chaste to me,
What care I how chaste she be?

No; she must be perfect snow,
In effect as well as show;
Warming but as snow-balls do,
Not like fire, by burning too;
But when she by change hath got
To her heart a second lot,
Then, if others share with me,
Farewell her, whate'er she be!

This satirical poet, who was born in 1574, at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, in Leicestershire, devoted himself to the church, and after several ecclesiastical preferments, was created Bishop of Norwich, by Charles I., in 1641; but during the troubled times that succeeded he was committed to the Tower, and subjected to sequestration. He died in 1656, at the age of eighty-two, and in the midst of poverty and obscurity. The poetry of Hall is distinguished for vigour and harmony, and on account of his eloquent illustrations of moral duties, he has often been denominated the "Christian Seneca."

YOUTHFUL DESIRE OF TRAVEL.

The brain-sick youth, that feeds his tickled ear
With sweet-sauced lies of some false traveller,
Which hath the Spanish Decades read awhile,
Or whetstone leasings of old Mandeville,
Now with discourses breaks his midnight sleep
Of his adventures through the Indian deep;
Of all their massy heaps of golden mine,
Or of the antique tombs of Palestine,
Or of Damascus' magic wall of glass;
Of Solomon his sweating piles of brass,
Of the bird ruc that bears an elephant,
Of mermaids that the southern seas do haunt,
Of headless men, of savage cannibals,
The fashions of their lives and governals;
What monstrous cities there erected be,
Cairo, or the city of the Trinity;
Now are they dunghill cocks that have not seen
The bordering Alps, or else the neighbour Rhine:
And now he plies the news-full Grasshopper,
Of voyages and ventures to inquire.
His land mortgaged, he sea-beat in the way,
Wishes for home a thousand sighs a day;
And now he deems his home-bred fare as leif
As his parch'd biscuit, or his barrell'd beef.
'Mongst all these stirs of discontented strife,
O let me lead an academic life;
To know much, and to think for nothing, know
Nothing to have, yet think we have enow;
In skill to want, and wanting seek for more;
In weal nor want, nor wish for greater store.
Envy, ye monarchs, with your proud excess,
At our low sail, and our high happiness.

THE HOLLOW INVITATION.

The courteous citizen bade me to his feast,
With hollow words, and overly request:
"Come, will ye dine with me this holyday?"
I yielded, though he hoped I would say nay:
For had I mayden'd it, as many use;
Loath for to grant, but loather to refuse—
"Alacke sir, I were loath; another day,—
I should but trouble you;—pardon me, if you may"—
No pardon should I need; for, to depart
He gives me leave, and thanks too, in his heart.
Two words for monie, Darbishirian wise,
(That's one too manie) is a naughtie guise.
Who looks for double biddings to a feast,
May dine at home for an importune guest.
I went, then saw, and found the greate expence;
The fare and fashions of our citizens.
Oh, Cleoparical! what wanteth there
For curious cost, and wondrous choice of cheere?
Beefe, that erst Hercules held for finest fare:
Porke for the fat Bœotian, or the hare
For Martial; fish for the Venetian;
Goose-liver for the likorous Romane;
Th' Athenian's goate; quaile, Iolan's cheere;
The hen for Esculape, and the Parthian deere;
Grapes for Arcesilas, figs for Plato's mouth,
And chesnuts faire for Amarillis' tooth.
Hadst thou such cheere? wert thou evere there before?
Never.—I thought so: nor come there no more.
Come there no more; for so meant all that cost:
Never hence take me for thy second host.
For whom he means to make an often guest,
One dish shall serve; and welcome make the rest.

CONCLUSION TO HIS SATIRES.

Thus have I writ, in smoother cedar tree,
So gentle Satires, penn'd so easily.
Henceforth I write in crabbed oak tree rynde,
Search they that mean the secret meaning find.
Hold out ye guilty and ye galled hides,
And meet my far-fetch'd stripes with waiting sides.

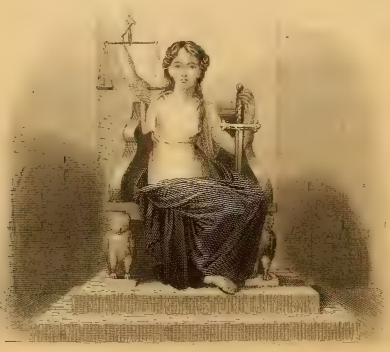
THE year of his birth is uncertain. He was educated for the church at the university of Cambridge, and obtained the living of Alderston in Suffolk, where he died in 1623. His principal work is The Temptation and Victory of Christ.

JUSTICE.

She was a virgin of austere regard:
Not as the world esteems her, deaf and blind;
But as the eagle, that hath oft compared
Her eye with heaven's, so, and more brightly shined
Her lamping sight: for she the same could wind
Into the solid heart, and, with her ears,
The silence of the thought loud speaking hears,
And in one hand a pair of even scales she wears.

No riot of affection revel kept
Within her breast, but a still apathy
Possessed all her soul, which softly slept
Securely without tempest; no sad cry
Awakes her pity, but wrong'd Poverty
Sending his eyes to heaven swimming in tears,
With hideous clamours ever struck her ears,
Whetting the blazing sword that in her hand she bears.

The winged lightning is her Mercury,
And round about her mighty thunders sound:
Impatient of himself lies pining by
Pale Sickness, with his kercher'd head upwound,
And thousand noisome plagues attend her round.
But if her cloudy brow but once grow foul,
The flints do melt, and rocks to water roll,
And airy mountains shake, and frighted shadows howl.



Davenport

PHINEAS FLETCHER was the elder brother of Giles, and like him a successful imitator of Spenser. He selected, however, an unfortunate subject for his Muse, which was the Purple Island, where he exhausted all the powers of a rich imagination in endeavouring to make an anatomical treatise poetical. On this account the work, notwithstanding its intrinsic merits, has long sunk into universal neglect.

HAPPINESS OF THE SHEPHERD'S LIFE.

Thrice, oh, thrice happy, shepherd's life and state!
When courts are happiness, unhappy pawns!
His cottage low and safely humble gate
Shuts out proud Fortune, with her scorns and fawns:
No feared treason breaks his quiet sleep:
Singing all day, his flocks he learns to keep;
Himself as innocent as are his simple sheep.

No Serian worms he knows, that with their thread
Draw out their silken lives: nor silken pride:
His lambs' warm fleece well fits his little need,
Not in that proud Sidonian tincture dyed:
No empty hopes, no courtly fears him fright;
Nor begging wants his middle fortune bite:
But sweet content exiles both misery and spite.

Instead of music, and base flattering tongues,
Which wait to first salute my lord's uprise;
The cheerful lark wakes him with early songs,
And birds' sweet whistling notes unlock his eyes:
In country plays is all the strife he uses;
Or sing, or dance unto the rural Muses;
And but in music's sports all difference refuses.

His certain life, that never can deceive him,
Is full of thousand sweets, and rich content:
The smooth-leaved beeches in the field receive him
With coolest shades, till noon-tide rage is spent:
His life is neither toss'd in boist'rous seas
Of troublous world, nor lost in slothful ease;
Pleased, and full blest he lives, when he his God can please.

His bed of wool yields safe and quiet sleeps,
While by his side his faithful spouse hath place;
His little son into his bosom creeps,
The lively picture of his father's face:
Never his humble house nor state torment him;
Less he could like, if less his God had sent him;
And when he dies, green turfs, with grassy tomb, content him.

This poet was born in the parish of Tisbury, Wiltshire, in 1570, and was educated at Queen's College, Oxford; after which he removed to the Inner Temple; but from this place he was expelled on account of his riotous conduct. One year, however, after this unfortunate circumstance, he published his *Nosce Teipsum*, a poem on the Immortality of the Soul, with which James I. was so highly gratified, that he honoured the author with his royal patronage on his accession to the throne of England. In consequence of this the rise of Davies was rapid, so that in 1626 he was appointed Lord Chief Justice of England; but before he could be sworn into office he died suddenly of apoplexy, on the night of the 7th of December, in the fifty-seventh year of his age. It is worthy of remark, that Sir John, after writing so argumentative and religious a poem as that on the Immortality of the Soul, at the age of twenty-five, and while he was notorious only as a wild young barrister, should have written his Orchestra, or the Art of Dancing, when he was a grave statesman and judge, at fifty-two. Besides these works, he wrote Hymns to Astrea, a collection of Acrostics on the name of Elizabeth; also two treatises upon the condition of Ireland, which were fraught with sound political wisdom.

VARIOUS DEFINITIONS OF THE SOUL, AND THEIR FRUITLESSNESS.

One thinks the Soul is air; another fire;
  Another blood, diffused about the heart;
Another saith, the elements conspire,
  And to her essence each doth give a part.

Musicians think our souls are harmonies;
  Physicians hold that they complexions be;
Epicures make them swarms of atomies,
  Which do by chance into our bodies flee.

Some think one general Soul fills every brain,
  As the bright sun sheds light in every star;
And others think the name of Soul is vain,
  And that we only well-mixt bodies are.

In judgment of her substance thus they vary;
  And thus they vary in judgment of her seat;
For some her chair up to the brain do carry,
  Some thrust it down into the stomach's heat.

Some place it in the root of life, the heart;
  Some in the river, fountain of the veins;
Some say, she's all in all, and all in every part;
  Some say, she's not contain'd, but all contains.

Thus these great clerks their little wisdom shew,
  While with their doctrines they at hazard play;
Tossing their light opinions to and fro,
  To mock the lewd, as learn'd in this as they.

For no crazed brain could ever yet propound,
Touching the Soul, so vain and fond a thought;
But some among these masters have been found,
Which in their schools the self-same thing have taught.

God only wise, to punish pride of wit,
Among men's wits hath this confusion wrought,
As the proud tower whose points the clouds did hit,
By tongues' confusion was to ruin brought.

But Thou which didst man's soul of nothing make,
And when to nothing it was fallen again,
"To make it new, the form of man didst take;
And God with God, becam'st a man with men:"

Thou that hast fashion'd twice this Soul of ours,
So that she is by double title thine;
Thou only know'st her nature and her powers,
Her subtil form thou only canst define.

From The Immortality of the Soul.

PRAISE OF DANCING.

Of all their ways I love Meander's path
Which to the tune of dying swans doth dance,
Such winding flights, such turns and cricks he hath,
Such creaks, such wrenches, and such dalliance;
That whether it be hap or heedless chance,
In this indented course and wriggling play
He seems to dance a perfect cunning hay.

But wherefore do these streams for ever run?
To keep themselves for ever sweet and clear:
For let their everlasting course be done,
They straight corrupt and foul with mud appear.
O ye sweet nymphs that beauty's loss do fear,
Contemn the drugs that physic doth devise,
And learn of love this dainty exercise.

See how those flowers that have sweet beauty too
(The only jewels that the earth doth wear,
When the young sun in bravery her doth woo),
As oft as they the whistling wind do hear,
Do wave their tender bodies here and there;
And though their dance no perfect measure is,
Yet oftentimes their music makes them kiss.

From the Orchestra.

This voluminous writer was born at Atherston, in Warwickshire, as it is conjectured, in 1563, and in consequence of the poverty of his parents was educated at the expense of Sir Godfrey Goodere. He seems to have been distinguished at an early period for poetical talent. On the accession of James I. to the throne of England, Drayton hastened with the crowd to worship the rising sun, and hymned the joyful occasion; but the monarch, it would appear, paid no attention to his verses, and the poet was consigned to his original penury. His life, after this, was a struggle, in which he supported himself by the labours of his pen, while his literary avocations were constantly intermingled with quarrels with his booksellers. He died in 1631. The principal works of Drayton are, Moses's Birth and Miracles, The Barons' Wars, Nymphidia, and Poly-olbion, in which there is everywhere to be found a rich fund of poetical sentiment and description. But unfortunately, his imagination was overlaid by his reading, so that the minuteness of the chronicle writer and the geographer often supersede the ardour of the poet. On this account, his chief production, the Poly-olbion, consisting of about thirty thousand verses, notwithstanding its great power, and numerous sparkling passages, is universally neglected.

HENRY V. AND HIS TROOPS ON THE NIGHT BEFORE THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT.

The night forerunning this most dreadful day,
The French that all to jollity incline,
Some fall to dancing, some again to play,
And some are drinking to this great design;
But all in pleasure spend the night away:
The tents with lights, the fields with bonfires shine;
The common soldiers freemen's catches sing;
With shouts and laughter all the camp doth ring

The wearied English, watchful o'er their foes,
The depth of night then drawing on so fast,
That fain a little would themselves repose,
With thanks to God do take that small repast
Which that poor village willingly bestows;
And having placed their sentinels at last,
They fall to prayer, and in their cabins blest,
T' refresh their spirits then took them to their rest.

In his pavilion princely Henry laid,
Whilst all his army round about him slept;
His restless head upon his helmet staid,
For careful thoughts his eyes long waking kept.
"Great God (quoth he), withdraw not now thy aid,
Nor let my father Henry's sins be heapt
On my transgressions, up the sum to make,
For which thou may'st me utterly forsake.

"King Richard's wrongs to mind, Lord do not call,
Nor how for him my father did offend;
From us alone derive not thou his fall,
Whose odious life caused his untimely end,
That by our alms be expiated all:
Let not that sin on me his son descend,
When as his body I translated have,
And buried in an honourable grave."

From The Battle of Agincourt.

NIGHT.

The sullen night had her black curtain spread,
Lowering that day had tarried up so long,
And that the morrow might lie along abed,
She all the heaven with dusky clouds had hung:
Cynthia pluck'd in her newly-horned head
Away to West, and under earth she flung,
As she had long'd to certify the Sun,
What in his absence in our world was done.

The lesser lights, like sentinels in war,
Behind the clouds stood privily to pry,
As though unseen they subtly strove from far,
Of his escape the manner to descry.
Hid was each wandering as each fixed star,
As they had held a council in the sky,
And had concluded with that present night,
That not a star should once give any light.

In a slow silence all the shores are hush'd,
Only the scritch-owl sounded to th' assault,
And Isis with a troubled murmur rush'd,
As if consenting, and would hide the fault;
And as his foot the sand or gravel crush'd,
There was a little whispering in the vault,
Moved by his treading, softly as he went,
Which seem'd to say, it further'd his intent.

From The Barons' Wars: Book III.

QUEEN MAB'S CHARIOT.

Her chariot ready strait is made,
Each thing therein is fitting laid,
That she by nothing might be stay'd,
For nought must her be letting:

Four nimble gnats the horses were,
Their harnesses of gossamere,
Fly Cranion, her charioteer,
Upon the coach-box getting.

Her chariot of a snail's fine shell,
Which for the colours did excel:
The fair Queen Mab becoming well,
So lively was the limning:
The seat the soft woll of the bee,
The cover (gallantly to see)
The wing of a pyed butterflee,
I trow, 'twas simple trimming.

The wheels composed of crickets' bones,
And daintily made for the nonce,
For fear of rattling on the stones,
With thistle-down they shod it:
For all her maidens much did fear,
If Oberon had chanced to hear,
That Mab his Queen should have been there,
He would not have abode it.

From Nymphidia: the Court of Fairy.

THE BIRTH OF MOSES.

Yet 'tis so sweet, so amiably fair,
That their pleased eyes with rapture it behold,
The glad-sad parents full of joy and care
Fain would reserve their infant if they could;
And still they tempt the sundry varying hours,
Hopes and despairs together strangely mixt,
Distasting sweets with many cordial sours,
Opposed interchangeably betwixt,
If aught it ail'd or haplessly it cried,
Unheard of any that she might it keep,
With one short breath she did entreat and chide,
And in a moment she did sing and weep.
Three labouring months them flatterer-like beguiled,
And danger still redoubling as it lasts,
Suspecting most the safety of the child,
Thus the kind mother carefully forecasts:
To Pharaoh's will she awfully must bow,
And therefore hastens to abridge these fears,
And to the flood determines it should go,
Yet ere it went she'll drown it with her tears.

From Moses's Birth and Miracles.

THIS writer, who was of some note in his day, is now almost wholly and perhaps unjustly forgotten. He was born at Taunton, in Somersetshire, in 1562, and was the son of a music-master. At the age of seventeen, he entered Magdalen Hall, Oxford, where he made considerable proficiency in learning. It is worthy of remark, that after some years, when the Earl of Southampton, the friend of the unfortunate Earl of Essex, was under disgrace, Daniel, who had enjoyed the patronage of that nobleman, continued to cling to him in adversity, and in spite of the danger of court disgrace. Daniel succeeded Spenser as Poet Laureate, and died in October 1619. Of the estimation in which he was held as a poet by his illustrious contemporaries, the eulogies written upon him by Spenser, Browne, and others, are a sufficient proof. His chief work is a poem in Eight Books, entitled A History of the Civil Wars between the Houses of York and Lancaster.

THE QUEEN OF RICHARD II. AWAITING THE ENTRANCE OF HER HUSBAND AND BOLINGBROKE INTO LONDON.

Strait towards London, in this heat of pride,
They forward set, as they had fore-decreed;
With whom the captive king, constrain'd, must ride,
Most meanly mounted on a simple steed;
Degraded of all grace and ease beside,
Thereby neglect of all respect to breed.
For th' overspreading pomp of prouder might
Must darken weakness, and debase his sight.

Now Isabel, the young afflicted queen,
(Whose years had never shew'd her but delights,
Nor lovely eyes before had ever seen
Other than smiling joys, and joyful sights:
Born great, match'd great, lived great, and ever been
Partaker of the world's best benefits,)
Had placed herself, hearing her lord should pass
That way, where she unseen in secret was;

Sick of delay, and longing to behold
Her long-miss'd love in fearful jeopardies:
To whom although it had in sort been told
Of their proceeding, and of his surprise;
Yet thinking they would never be so bold,
To lead their lord in any shameful wise;
But rather would conduct him as their king,
As seeking but the state's re-ordering.

And forth she looks, and notes the foremost train;
And grieves to view some there she wish'd not there.
Seeing the chief not come, stays, looks again;
And yet she sees not him that should appear.
Then back she stands; and then desires, as fain
Again to look, to see if he were near.
At length a glitt'ring troop far off she spies;
Perceives the throng, and hears the shouts and cries.

"Lo yonder! now at length he comes," saith she:
"Look, my good women, where he is in sight.
Do you not see him? Yonder; that is he!
Mounted on that white courser, all in white;
There where the thronging troops of people be.
I know him by his seat: He sits upright.
Lo, now he bows! Dear lord, with what sweet grace!
How long have I long'd to behold that face!

"O what delight my heart takes by mine eye!
I doubt me when he comes but something near,
I shall set wide the window——What care I,
Who doth see me, so him I may see clear?"—
Thus doth false joy delude her wrongfully
(Sweet lady) in the thing she held so dear:
For, nearer come, she finds she had mistook,
And him she mark'd was Henry Bolingbroke.

Then envy takes the place in her sweet eyes,
Where sorrow had prepared herself a seat;
And words of wrath, from whence complaints should rise,
Proceed from eager looks, and brows that threat:
"Traitor," saith she; "is't thou, that in this wise
To brave thy lord and king art made so great?
And have mine eyes done unto me this wrong,
To look on thee? For this stay'd I so long?

"Ah! have they graced a perjured rebel so?
Well; for their error I will weep them out,
And hate the tongue defiled, that praised my foe;
And loathe the mind, that gave me not to doubt.
What! have I added shame unto my woe?
I'll look no more—Ladies, look you about;
And tell me if my lord be in this train;
Lest my betraying eyes should err again." * * *

"What might he be," she said, "that thus alone
Rides pensive in this universal joy?
* * * *
"Let me not see him but himself, a king:
For so he left me, so he did remove.
This is not he, this feels some other thing;
A passion of dislike, or else of love.
O yes, 'tis he! That princely face doth bring
The evidence of majesty to prove:
That face I have conferr'd which now I see,
With that within my heart, and they agree."

JOHN DONNE, who has been so highly eulogised by Dryden, Pope, and our most eminent poets, was born in London, in 1573. He entered Lincoln's Inn, intending to qualify himself for the bar; but the subject of theology soon occupying his principal study, he after mature deliberation abandoned the Church of Rome, in which he had been educated, and declared his adhesion to the Protestant faith. Having accompanied the Earl of Essex upon his expedition to Cadiz, in 1596, he subsequently travelled several years in France and Italy, after which he was appointed secretary to Lord Chancellor Egerton. The friends of Donne, however, being anxious that he should devote his talents to the church, he at last yielded to their solicitations, and was finally appointed chaplain to Charles I., and Dean of St. Paul's. He died on the 31st March, 1631. His poems, which are of a miscellaneous character, suggested by the impulse of the moment rather than the result of systematic study, consist chiefly of satires, elegies, songs, and sonnets; and although his versification is frequently harsh, and his language pedantic, yet his productions possess an innate vigour and freshness which will always secure them a high rank in our English poetry.

HIS PICTURE.

Here, take my picture; though I bid farewell,
Thine in my heart, where my soul dwells, shall dwell;
'Tis like me now, but, I dead, 'twill be more,
When we are shadows both, than 'twas before.
When weather-beaten I come back, my hand,
Perhaps, with rude oars torn, or sun-beams tann'd;
My face and breast of hair-cloth, and my head
With Care's harsh sudden hoariness o'erspread;
My body a sack of bones, broken within,
And powder's blue stains scatter'd on my skin;
If rival fools tax thee t' have loved a man
So foul and coarse as, oh! I may seem then,
This shall say what I was; and thou shalt say,
Do his hurts reach me? doth my worth decay?
Or do they reach his judging mind, that he
Should now love less what he did love to see?
That which in him was fair and delicate,
Was but the milk which in Love's childish state
Did nurse it, who now is grown strong enough
To feed on that which to weak tastes seems tough.

From the Elegies.

THE DISSOLUTION.

She's dead! and all which die
To their first elements resolve;
And we were mutual elements to us,
And made of one another.
My body then doth her's involve,
And those things, whereof I consist, hereby
In me abundant grow and burdenous,
And nourish not, but smother.

*

My fire of passion, sighs of air,
Water of tears, and earthly sad despair,
Which my materials be,
(But near worn out by Love's security)
She, to my loss, doth by her death repair;
And I might live long wretched so,
But that my fire doth with my fuel grow.

SONNET.

What if the present were the world's last night?
Mark in my heart, O Soul! where thou dost dwell,
The picture of Christ crucified, and tell
Whether his countenance can thee affright;
Tears in his eyes quench the amazing light;
Blood fills his frowns, which from his pierced head fell.
And can that tongue adjudge thee unto hell
Which pray'd forgiveness for his foes' fierce spite?
No, no; but as in my idolatry
I said to all my profane mistresses,
Beauty of pity, foulness only is
A sign of rigour, so I say to thee:
To wicked spirits are horrid shapes assign'd;
This beauteous form assumes a piteous mind.



This talented and original writer is better known by his Anatomy of Melancholy than his poetry, although he was attached to the study of the latter; and the specimen which we have extracted from his preface to the Anatomy is no inconsiderable proof of his poetical powers. He was born in 1576. He studied at Brazen Nose College, and was made vicar of St. Thomas, Oxford, where he died in 1639.

PAINS AND PLEASURES OF MELANCHOLY.

When I lie, sit, or walk alone
I sigh, I grieve, making great moan,
In a dark grove, or irksome den,
With discontents and furies, then
A thousand miseries at once
Mine heavy heart and soul ensconce.
All my griefs to this are jolly,
None so sour as melancholy.

Methinks I hear, methinks I see
Sweet music, wondrous melody,
Towns, palaces, and cities fine,
Here now, then there, the world is mine;
Rare beauties, gallant ladies shine,
Whate'er is lovely or divine.
All other joys to this are folly,
None so sweet as melancholy.

Methinks I hear, methinks I see
Ghosts, goblins, fiends:—my fantasy
Presents a thousand ugly shapes,
Headless bears, black men, and apes.
Doleful outcries, and fearful sights,
My sad and dismal soul affrights.
All my griefs to this are jolly,
None so damn'd as melancholy.

Methinks I court, methinks I kiss,
Methinks I now embrace my miss:
O blessed days, O sweet content!
In Paradise my time is spent!
Such thoughts may still my fancy move,
So may I ever be in love!
All my joys to this are folly,
Nought so sweet as melancholy.

Of this author little is known except that he was the son of that Secretary of State whom Queen Elizabeth treated so harshly, under the false pretence that he had hurried on the execution of the unfortunate Mary Stuart, without her privacy or consent. Davison published several poetical pieces in 1602, in a Miscellany, of which he was the editor. The following production, which appeared in it, was his own, although it has been erroneously ascribed to a different author.

A FICTION HOW CUPID MADE A NYMPH WOUND HERSELF WITH HIS ARROWS.

It chanced of late a shepherd's swain,
That went to seek a strayed sheep,
Within a thicket, on the plain,
Espied a dainty nymph asleep.

Her golden hair o'erspread her face,
Her careless arms abroad were cast,
Her quiver had her pillow's place,
Her breast lay bare to every blast.

The shepherd stood and gazed his fill,
Nought durst he do, nought durst he say;
When chance, or else perhaps his will,
Did guide the god of love that way.

The crafty boy that sees her sleep
Whom, if she waked, he durst not see,
Behind her closely seeks to creep,
Before her nap should ended be.

There come, he steals her shafts away,
And puts his own into their place;
Ne dares he any longer stay,
But, ere she wakes, hies thence apace.

Scarce was he gone when she awakes,
And spies the shepherd standing by;
Her bended bow in haste she takes,
And at the simple swain let fly.

Forth flew the shaft, and pierced his heart,
That to the ground he fell with pain;
Yet up again forthwith he start,
And to the nymph he ran amain.

Amazed to see so strange a sight,
She shot, and shot, but all in vain;
The more his wounds, the more his might,
Love yieldeth strength in midst of pain.

Her angry eyes are great with tears,
She blames her hands, she blames her skill;
The bluntness of her shafts she fears,
And try them on herself she will.

Take heed, sweet nymph, try not thy shaft!
Each little touch will prick the heart:
Alas! thou know'st not Cupid's craft,
Revenge is joy, the end is smart.

Yet try she will, and prick some bare;
Her hands were gloved, and next to hand
Was that fair breast, that breast so rare,
That made the shepherd senseless stand.

That breast she prick'd, and through that breast
Love finds an entry to her heart:
At feeling of this new-come guest,
Lord! how the gentle nymph doth start.

She runs not now, she shoots no more;
Away she throws both shafts and bow:
She seeks for that she shunn'd before,
She thinks the shepherd's haste too slow.

Though mountains meet not, lovers may,
So others do, and so do they;
The god of love sits on a tree,
And laughs that pleasant sight to see.

DESIRE'S GOVERNMENT.

Where Wit is over-ruled by Will,
And Will is led by fond Desire,
There Reason were as good be still,
As speaking, kindle greater fire.
For where Desire doth bear the sway,
The heart must rule, the head obey.

What boots the cunning pilot's skill,
To tell which way to shape their course,
When he that steers will have his will,
And drive them where he list perforce?
So Reason shews the truth in vain
Where fond Desire as king doth reign.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND, of Hawthornden, son to Sir John Drummond, was born at that romantic seat near Edinburgh, from which he derives his title, in the year 1585. He received his education at the High School and University of Edinburgh, from which he departed to France, where he studied Civil Law for four years. On the expiration of that period he returned to his native residence, where he devoted his time to the study of the Classics. Having formed an attachment to an amiable and beautiful lady, the day of marriage was appointed, and a bright prospect of happiness lay before him, but her sudden sickness and death blasted his expectations. To soften the anguish of this bereavement, he once more left his beautiful and classic seclusion, and travelled for eight years through Germany, France, and Italy. He returned to Scotland at the commencement of the civil war; and finding in his forty-fifth year a lady who resembled her he had lost, he married her, and spent the remainder of his life at Hawthornden. He was highly esteemed by his learned and poetical contemporaries; and Ben Jonson, one of the most distinguished of their number, walked into Scotland, in 1619, for the purpose of seeing him, and enjoying his conversation. He died on the 4th of December, 1649.

SONNET.

That learned Grecian who did so excel
In knowledge passing sense, that he is named
Of all the after-worlds divine, doth tell,
That all the time when first our souls are framed,
Ere in these mansions blind they come to dwell,
They live bright rays of that eternal light,
And others see, know, love, in heaven's great height;
Not toil'd with aught to reason doth rebel.
It is most true, for straight at the first sight
My mind me told that in some other place
It elsewhere saw th' idea of that face,
And loved a love of heavenly pure delight.
What wonder now I feel so fair a flame,
Since I her loved ere on this earth she came?

SONNET.

O Fate, conjured to pour your worst on me!
O rigorous rigour which doth all confound!
With cruel hands ye have cut down the tree,
And fruit with leaves have scatter'd on the ground.
A little space of earth my love doth bound:
That beauty which did raise it to the sky,
Turn'd in disdained dust, now low doth lie,
Deaf to my plaints, and senseless of my wound.
Ah! did I live for this? ah! did I love?
And was't for this (fierce powers) she did excel—
That ere she well the sweets of life did prove,
She should (too dear a guest) with darkness dwell!
Weak influence of heaven! what fair is wrought,
Falls in the prime, and passeth like a thought.

CONSOLATION FOR THE DEATH OF HIS MISTRESS.

If she be dead, then she of loathsome days
Hath past the line, whose length but loss bewrays;
Then she hath left this filthy stage of care,
Where pleasures seldom, woe doth still, repair.
For all the pleasures which it doth contain,
Not countervail the smallest minute's pain.
And tell me, thou who dost so much admire
This little vapour, this poor spark of fire,
Which life is call'd, what doth it thee bequeath,
But some few years, which birth draws out to death?
Which if thou parallel with lustres run,
Or those whose courses are but now begun,
In days great number they shall less appear,
Than with the sea when matched is a tear.
But why should'st thou here longer wish to be?
One year doth serve all nature's pomp to see.
Nay, even one day and night: This moon, that sun,
Those lesser fires about this round which run,
Be but the same, which under Saturn's reign,
Did the serpentine seasons interchain.
How oft doth life grow less by living long?
And what excelleth but what dieth young?
For age, which all abhor (yet would embrace)
Doth make the mind as wrinkled as the face.
Then leave laments, and think thou didst not live
Laws to that first eternal cause to give,
But to obey those laws which He hath given,
And bow unto the just decrees of Heaven,
Which cannot err, whatever foggy mists
Do blind men in these sublunary lists.

But what if she, for whom thou spends those groans,
And wastes thy life's dear torch in ruthful moans,
She, for whose sake thou hat'st the joyful light,
Courts solitary shades and irksome night,
Doth live? Ah! if thou canst, through tears, a space
Lift thy dimm'd lights, and look upon this face;
Look if those eyes which, fool, thou didst adore,
Shine not more bright than they were wont before.
Look if those roses death could aught impair,
Those roses which thou once said'st were so fair;
And if these locks have lost aught of that gold,
Which once they had when thou them didst behold.
I live, and happy live, but thou art dead,
And still shalt be, till thou be like me made.

SONNET.

Sweet bird, that sing'st away the early hours
Of winters past, or coming, void of care,
Well pleased with delights which present are,
Fair seasons, budding sprays, sweet-smelling flowers:
To rocks, to springs, to rills, from leafy bowers,
Thou thy Creator's goodness dost declare,
And what dear gifts on thee he did not spare,
A stain to human sense in sin that lowers.
What soul can be so sick, which by thy songs
(Attired in sweetness) sweetly is not driven
Quite to forget earth's turmoils, spites, and wrongs,
And lift a reverend eye and thought to heaven?
Sweet, artless songster, thou my mind dost raise
To airs of spheres, yea, and to angels' lays.

DEDICATION OF A CHURCH.

Jerusalem, that place divine,
The vision of sweet peace is named;
In heaven her glorious turrets shine,
Her walls of living stones are framed,
While angels guard her on each side,
Fit company for such a bride.
She deck'd in new attire from heaven,
Her wedding-chamber now descends,
Prepared in marriage to be given
To Christ, on whom her joy depends.
Her walls wherewith she is enclosed,
And streets are of pure gold composed.
The gates adorn'd with pearls most bright
The way to hidden glory show;
And thither by the blessed might
Of faith in Jesus' merits go,
All these who are on earth distrest
Because they have Christ's name profest.
These stones the workmen dress and beat,
Before they throughly polish'd are,
Then each is in his proper seat
Establish'd by the builder's care,
In this fair frame to stand for ever
So join'd that them no force can sever.
To God who sits in highest seat,
Glory and power given be,
To Father, Son, and Paraclete,
Who reign in equal dignity,
Whose boundless power we still adore,
And sing their praise for evermore.

OF A BEE.

O do not kill that bee
That thus hath wounded thee;
Sweet, it was no despite,
But hue did him deceive:
For when thy lips did close,
He deemed them a rose.
What wouldst thou further crave?
He wanting wit, and blinded with delight,
Would fain have kiss'd, but mad with joy did bite.

UPON A BAY TREE, NOT LONG SINCE GROWING IN THE RUINS OF VIRGIL'S TOMB.

Those stones which once had trust
Of Maro's sacred dust,
Which now of their first beauty spoil'd are seen,
That they due praise not want,
Inglorious and remain,
A Delian tree (fair nature's only plant)
Now courts, and shadows with her tresses green:
Sing Io Pæan, ye of Phœbus' train,
Though Envy, Avarice, Time, your tombs throw down,
With maiden laurels Nature will them crown.

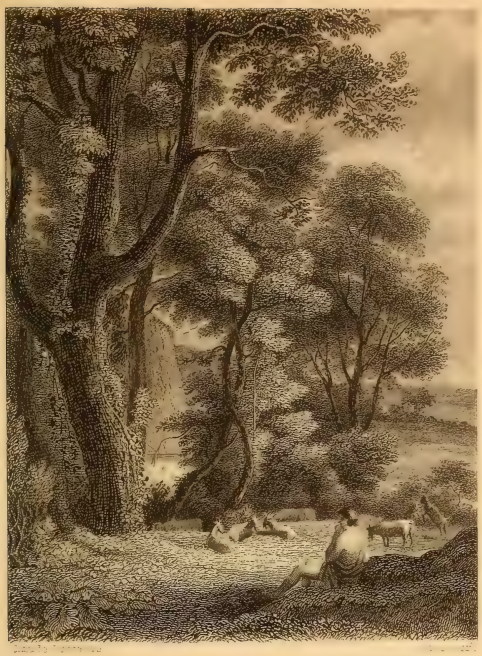
UPON A GLASS.

If thou wouldst see threads purer than the gold,
Where love his wealth doth show—
But take this glass, and thy fair hair behold:
If whiteness thou wouldst see more white than snow,
And read on wonder's book—
Take but this glass, and on thy forehead look.
Wouldst thou in winter see a crimson rose,
Whose thorns do hurt each heart?
Look but in glass how thy sweet lips do close.
Wouldst thou see planets which all good impart,
Or meteors divine?
But take this glass, and gaze upon thine een.
No, planets, rose, snow, gold, can not compare
With you, dear eyes, lips, brows, and amber hair.

GEORGE WITHER was born in 1588, at Bentworth, near Alton, and was descended from a family of substance and consideration in Hampshire. At the age of sixteen, George was sent to the university of Oxford; but after a short sojourn there, and while he was just beginning to be enamoured of science, he was summoned home by his father to the occupations of farming. Disgusted at this change, he repaired to London in the hope of succeeding at Court: but when he discovered how completely flattery was necessary for success in such a region, his manly spirit loathed the conditions, and his indignation broke forth in an energetic satire, entitled, Abuses Whipt and Stript. In those days, however, it was dangerous to utter even the most palpable truths against courtiers and men in power, and the poet was sent to prison, where he continued for several months. But here his pen was not idle, for, among other productions, he wrote his Shepherd's Hunting, a work abounding in much deep feeling, and many admirable touches of poetical beauty. He also composed in prison his Satire to the King, a poem written in a manly, uncompromising spirit, which, however, procured him his liberation. After he had been set at liberty, he published the Hymns and Songs of the Church, a work undertaken under the protection of James I., and with the sanction of one of the highest dignitaries of the church. But through the factious opposition of Wither's political enemies, and the selfishness of the booksellers—of whom he complained, that they were like "cruel bee-masters, who burn the poor Athenian bees for their honey"—the effort was unsuccessful: even several of the clergy interfered with his design, and most unjustly branded his pious and orthodox effusions with the title of "needless songs and popish rhymes." After this, king James died, and Wither, on the demise of his royal patron, repaired to the Queen of Bohemia, that he might present to her, with his own hand, a translation of the Psalms, which he had been encouraged by his late sovereign to render into English verse.

On the commencement of the civil war, Wither sold his paternal estate, and raised a troop of horse for the service of the parliament; but he was taken prisoner by the enemy, and would have been executed, but for the interference, it is said, of Denham, the royalist poet. Wither was afterwards Major General for Surrey, under Oliver Cromwell, and was rewarded for his sacrifices in behalf of the Commonwealth, by a share of the sequestrations. This, unfortunately, he was obliged to refund at the Restoration, by which he was reduced to his former poverty. He indignantly remonstrated against the injustice of the new government in stripping him of his property, and for this he was twice imprisoned, first in Newgate, and afterwards in the Tower. Here he continued, for three years, to write remonstrances and complaints upon the iniquity with which he had been treated; and his representations, although ineffectual, were but too well grounded. At length he was released from prison on the 27th of July, 1663, on giving bond to the lieutenant of the Tower for his good behaviour, after which we know nothing of his history, except that he died on the 2d of May, 1667.

It was unfortunate for the poetical reputation of Wither, that he plunged into the troubled sea of war and politics; for his earliest productions are his best. In these he has depicted nature, and poured forth the amiable feelings of his own heart, in beautiful, energetic, and appropriate language—language which, he tells us, flowed forth without study, as he could not "spend time to put his meaning into other words." But party injuries and party principles, when he became a polemical writer, too often jarred the harmony of his feelings, and expressed themselves with the same spontaneity, but in a less happy style. Still, however, he clung to the Muse in prosperity and adversity, in freedom and bondage; and in prison, when even pen and ink were denied him, he wrote down his thoughts with red ochre upon his trencher. Few authors have also been more vilified and ridiculed, both during his life-time and after his death; but time, although tardily, has at length done justice to his memory, and he is now recognised as a genuine poet, notwithstanding the unmerited satire of Butler, Pope, and their contemporaries.



WITHER.

SONG OF THE NYMPH.

Gentle swain, good speed befall thee,
And in love still prosper thou:
Future times shall happy call thee,
Though thou lie neglected now.
Virtue's lovers shall commend thee,
And perpetual fame attend thee.

Happy are these woody mountains
In whose shadows thou dost hide;
And as happy are those fountains
By whose murmurs thou dost bide;
For contents are here excelling,
More than in a prince's dwelling.

There thy flocks do clothing bring thee,
And thy food out of the fields:
Pretty songs the birds do sing thee;
Sweet perfumes the meadow yields.

And what more is worth the seeing,
Heaven and earth thy prospect being?

Thy affection reason measures,
And distempers none it feeds;
Still so harmless are thy pleasures,
That no other's grief it breeds.
And if night begets thee sorrow,
Seldom stays it till the morrow.

From The Mistress of Philarete

RESISTANCE TO THE OPPRESSOR.

Do I not know a great man's power and might,
In spite of innocence, can smother right;
Colour his villanies to get esteem,
And make the honest man the villain seem?
I know it, and the world doth know 'tis true;
Yet I protest, if such a man I knew,
That might my country prejudice, or thee,
Were he the greatest or the proudest he
That breathes this day; if so it might be found
That any good to either might redound,
I, unappalled, dare in such a case,
Rip up his foulest crimes before his face,
Though for my labour I were sure to drop
Into the mouth of ruin without hope.

From a Satire, addressed to the King

THE STEDFAST SHEPHERD.

Hence away, thou Siren, leave me,
Pish! unclasp these wanton arms;
Sugar'd words can ne'er deceive me
(Though thou prove a thousand charms).
Fie, fie, forbear;
No common snare
Can ever my affection chain:
Thy painted baits,
And poor deceits,
Are all bestow'd on me in vain.

*

I'm no slave to such as you be;
Neither shall that snowy breast,
Rolling eye, and lip of ruby,
Ever rob me of my rest:
Go, go, display
Thy beauty's ray,
To some more-soon enamour'd swain:
Those common wiles
Of sighs and smiles
Are all bestow'd on me in vain.

I have elsewhere vow'd a duty;
Turn away thy tempting eye:
Show not me a painted beauty:
These impostures I defy.
My spirit loaths
Where gaudy clothes
And feigned oaths may love obtain:
I love her so,
Whose look swears No,
That all your labours will be vain.

Can he prize the tainted posies,
Which on every breast are worn;
That may pluck the virgin roses
From their never-touched thorn?
I can go rest
On her sweet breast,
That is the pride of Cynthia's train:
Then stay thy tongue,
Thy mermaid song
Is all bestow'd on me in vain.

He's a fool that basely dallies,
Where each peasant mates with him:
Shall I haunt the thronged valleys,
Whilst there's noble hills to climb?
No, no, though clowns
Are scared with frowns,
I know the best can but disdain;
And those I'll prove:
So will thy love
Be all bestow'd on me in vain.

FRANCIS QUARLES, one of those poets whose reputation is now only emerging from the obloquy under which it was industriously buried, was born at Stewards, near Romford, in Essex, in the year 1592. He was educated at Christ's College, Cambridge, after which he was entered at Lincoln's Inn; but his purpose in studying the law was to be able to arbitrate among his friends and neighbours, rather than to follow it as a profession. He was appointed cup-bearer to the Queen of Bohemia (daughter of James I.), and was afterwards secretary to Archbishop Usher. On the breaking out of the rebellion in Ireland, he fled from that kingdom, and, in consequence of the ruin of the royal cause in England, his property was confiscated. Even this he could have borne; but the ruin or dispersion of his books and manuscripts is supposed to have broken his heart. He died in 1644.

The poetry of Quarles has been much and unjustly ridiculed on account of the conceits with which it abounds. But the present age is beginning to rescue him from the contumely of heartless critics, and to do justice to his excellence. His verses are wonderfully harmonious for the period in which he lived; and many passages can be extracted from his writings which display not only great polish, but the utmost energy of diction and strength of imagination.

FAITH.

Advance thy shield of Patience to thy head,
And when Grief strikes, 'twill strike the striker dead.
In adverse fortunes, be thou strong and stout,
And bravely win thyself; heaven holds not out
His bow for ever bent; the disposition
Of noblest spirit doth, by opposition,
Exasperate the more: a gloomy night
Whets on the morning to return more bright.
Brave minds, oppress'd, should, in despite of Fate,
Look greatest, like the sun, in lowest state.
But, ah! shall God thus strive with flesh and blood?
Receives he glory from, or reaps he good
In mortals' ruin, that he leaves man so
To be o'erwhelm'd by this unequal foe?
May not a potter, that, from out the ground,
Hath framed a vessel, search if it be sound?
Or if, by furbishing, he take more pain
To make it fairer, shall the pot complain?
Mortal, thou art but clay; then shall not he,
That framed thee for his service, season thee?
Man, close thy lips; be thou no undertaker
Of God's designs: dispute not with thy Maker.

FROM A SONG.

TO THE TUNE OF 'CUCKOLDS ALL A-ROW.'

* * *

If once that Antichristian crew
Be crush'd and overthrown,
We'll teach the nobles how to crouch,
And keep the gentry down.
Good manners have an ill report,
And turn to pride, we see;
We'll therefore cry good manners down,
And hey! then up go we!

The name of lord shall be abhorr'd,
For every man 's a brother;
No reason why, in church or state,
One man should rule another.
But when the change of government
Shall set our fingers free,
We'll make the wanton sisters stoop,
And hey! then up go we!

Our cobblers shall translate their souls
From caves obscure and shady;
We'll make Tom T * * as good as my lord,
And Joan as good as my lady.
We'll crush and fling the marriage ring
Into the Roman see;
We'll ask no bands, but e'en clap hands,
And hey! then up go we!

EMBLEM I. BOOK III.

"MY SOUL HATH DESIRED THEE IN THE NIGHT."

Good God! what horrid darkness doth surround
My groping soul! how are my senses bound
In utter shades; and, muffled from the light,
Lurk in the bosom of eternal night!
The bold-faced lamp of heaven can set and rise,
And with his morning glory fill the eyes
Of gazing mortals; his victorious ray
Can chase the shadows and restore the day:
Night's bashful empress, though she often wane,
As oft repents her darkness, primes again;

And with her circling horns doth re-embrace
Her brother's wealth, and orbs her silver face.
But, ah! my sun, deep swallow'd in his fall,
Is set, and cannot shine, nor rise at all:
My bankrupt wain can beg nor borrow light;
Alas! my darkness is perpetual night.
Falls have their risings; wanings have their primes,
And desperate sorrows wait their better times:
Ebbs have their floods; and autumns have their springs;
All states have changes, hurried with the swings
Of chance and time, still riding to and fro:
Terrestrial bodies, and celestial too.
How often have I vainly groped about,
With lengthen'd arms, to find a passage out,
That I might catch those beams mine eye desires,
And bathe my soul in these celestial fires!
Like as the haggard, cloister'd in her mew,
To scour her downy robes, and to renew
Her broken flags, preparing t' overlook
The timorous mallard at the sliding brook,
Jets off from perch to perch; from stock to ground,
From ground to window, thus surveying round
Her dove-befeather'd prison, till at length
Calling her noble birth to mind, and strength
Whereto her wing was born, her ragged beak
Nips off her jangling jesses, strives to break
Her jingling fetters, and begins to bate
At every glimpse, and darts at every grate:
E'en so my weary soul, that long has been
An inmate in this tenement of sin,
Lock'd up by cloud-brow'd error, which invites
My cloister'd thoughts to feed on black delights,
Now suns her shadows, and begins to dart
Her wing'd desires at thee, that only art
The sun she seeks, whose rising beams can fright
These dusky clouds that make so dark a night.
Shine forth, great glory, shine; that I may see,
Both how to loathe myself, and honour thee:
But if my weakness force thee to deny
Thy flames, yet lend the twilight of thine eye:
If I must want those beams I wish, yet grant
That I at least may wish those beams I want.

THE VIRGIN TO HER CHILD.

Come, come, my blessed infant, and immure thee
Within the temple of my sacred arms;
Secure mine arms,—mine arms shall then secure thee
From Herod's fury, or the High Priest's harms:
Or if thy 'danger'd life sustain a loss,
My folded arms shall turn thy dying cross.

But ah! what savage tyrant can behold
The beauty of so sweet a face as this is
And not himself be by himself controll'd,
And change his fury to a thousand kisses!
One smile of thine is worth more mines of treasure
Than there were myriads in the days of Cæsar.

O had the Tetrarch, as he knew thy birth,
So known thy stock, he had not thought to paddle
In thy dear blood; but prostrate on the earth,
Had veil'd his crown before thy royal cradle;
And laid the sceptre of his glory down,
And begg'd a heavenly for an earthly crown.

Illustrious babe! how is thy handmaid graced
With a rich armful! how dost thou decline
Thy majesty, that wert so late embraced
In thy great Father's arms, and now in mine!
How humbly gracious art thou to refresh
Me with thy spirit, and assume my flesh!

But must the treason of a traitor's hail
Abuse the sweetness of these ruby lips?
Shall marble-hearted cruelty assail
These alabaster sides with knotted whips?
And must these smiling roses entertain
The blows of scorn, and flirts of base disdain?

Ah! must these dainty little springs, that twine
So fast about thy neck, be pierced and torn
With ragged nails; and must these brows resign
Their crown of glory for a crown of thorn?
Ah! must the blessed infant taste the pain
Of death's injurious pangs; nay, worse, be slain?

Sweet babe! at what dear rate do wretched I
Commit a sin! Lord, every sin 's a dart;
And every trespass lets a javelin fly;
And every javelin wounds thy bleeding heart.
Pardon, sweet babe, what I have done amiss;
And seal that granted pardon with a kiss.

From the Emblems.

GEORGE HERBERT, who was brother of the celebrated Lord Herbert of Cherbury, was born at Montgomery Castle, in Wales, on April 3rd, 1593, and was educated at Westminster school, and afterwards at Trinity College, Cambridge. His first aim was to succeed in life as a courtier, and for this purpose he ingratiated himself into the favour of James I., who rewarded his services with a sinecure worth 150*l.* per annum. But on the death of the king, and his principal court patrons, he renounced his ambitious hopes, and resolved to devote himself to the church, for which purpose he resumed his theological studies, and obtained the prebendary of Leighton Bromswold, in the diocese of Lincoln, and subsequently the living of Bemerton. After a life of apostolic piety and diligence in the office of a country pastor, he died in February 1632. The popularity of Herbert in his own day was extravagantly great; but much of this may be attributed to his personal character, and perhaps still more of it to the perverted taste of the age which Herbert has in many cases gratified to its utmost extreme. Hence the wings and altar-pieces into which he moulded the shape of his verses, and the strange parallels which he delighted in establishing. In consequence of these defects his poetry, although often striking and beautiful, is inferior to that of Quarles, Wither, and Crashaw.

SIN.

Lord, with what care hast thou begirt us round!
Parents first season us: then schoolmasters
Deliver us to laws; they send us bound
To rules of reason, holy messengers,
Pulpits and Sundays, sorrow dogging sin,
Afflictions sorted, anguish of all sizes,
Fine nets and stratagems to catch us in,
Bibles laid open, millions of surprises,
Blessings beforehand, ties of gratefulness,
The sound of glory ringing in our ears:
Without, our shame; within, our consciences;
Angels and grace, eternal hopes and fears.

Yet all these fences and their whole array
One cunning bosom-sin blows quite away.

LOVE.

Immortal Love, author of this great frame,
Sprung from that beauty which can never fade;
How hath man parcell'd out thy glorious name,
And thrown it on that dust which thou hast made.

While mortal love doth all the title gain!
Which siding with invention, they together
Bear all the sway, possessing heart and brain
(Thy workmanship), and give thee share in neither.

Wit fancies beauty, beauty raiseth wit:
The world is theirs; they two play out the game,
Thou standing by: and though thy glorious name
Wrought our deliverance from th' infernal pit,
Who sings thy praise?—only a scarf or glove
Doth warm our hands, and make them write of love.

APOLOGY FOR SACRED POETRY.

Who says that fictions only and false hair
Become a verse? Is there in Truth no beauty?
Is all good structure in a winding stair?
May no lines pass except they do their duty
Not to a true, but painted chair?

Is it no verse, except enchanted groves
And sudden arbours shadow coarse-spun lines?
Must purling streams refresh a lover's loves?
Must all be veil'd, while he that reads, divines
Catching the sense at two removes?

Shepherds are honest people; let them sing:
Riddle who list, for me, and pull for prime:
I envy no man's nightingale or spring;
Nor let them punish me with loss of rhyme,
Who plainly say, *My God, my King.*

EMPLOYMENT.

If, as a flower doth spread and die,
Thou wouldst extend me to some good,
Before I were by frost's extremity
Nipt in the bud;

The sweetness and the praise were thine:
But the extension and the room
Which in thy garland I should fill, were mine
At thy great doom.

For as thou dost impart thy grace,
  The greater shall our glory be.
The measure of our joys is in this place,
    The stuff with thee.

Let me not languish then, and spend
  A life as barren to thy praise
As is the dust, to which that life doth tend,
    But with delays.

All things are busy; only I
  Neither bring honey with the bees,
Nor flowers to make that, nor the husbandry
    To water these.

I am no link of thy great chain,
  But all my company is a weed.
Lord, place me in thy concert; give one strain
    To my poor reed.

VIRTUE.

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,
Sweet dews shall weep thy fall to-night,
    For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue, angry and brave,
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
Thy root is ever in its grave,
    And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie;
My music shows you have your closes,
    And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like season'd timber, never gives,
But when the whole world turns to coal,
    Then chiefly lives.

This poet, it is supposed, was born in London, where his father was a clergyman of high reputation. The year in which he was born is unknown; but it is supposed to have been about 1615. He was educated at the Charter House, and afterwards became a Fellow of Peter House, Cambridge; but from the latter place he was ejected by the Parliamentary army in 1644. He had been already distinguished as an eloquent and persuasive preacher; it is possible, however, that the injury he had sustained from the Puritan party acting upon an enthusiastic temperament, produced the change that followed; for he abandoned England for France, and abjured the Protestant faith for that of the Church of Rome. As he was in a comparatively destitute condition, the Queen of Charles I., who interested herself in his fortunes, advised him to repair to Italy in order to better his condition. He went thither accordingly, and became secretary to a cardinal; but in consequence of his remonstrances with the members of the cardinal's retinue on account of their dissolute conduct, his life was menaced, so that to escape their violence he was obliged to repair on a pilgrimage to Loretto. He overheated himself on the journey, and died a few weeks after his arrival, not without suspicion of having been poisoned by his enemies.

There is a richness and melody in the poetry of Crashaw to which we can scarcely find a parallel among the religious poets of the period; and in some of his descriptions, he seems to have caught the very spirit in which Milton conceived the brightest passages of his Paradise Lost. It is unfortunate, however, that his fancy was so unconstrained, and his taste so perverted, that he is seldom equal throughout any of his poems; and even the most beautiful of his ideas frequently terminate in a perplexing maze, or sink into absolute bathos. In the extract which we have given from his delightful poem, On the Assumption of the Virgin, the reader will not fail to remark the zeal of Crashaw for his adopted creed, and the fanciful application which he could make of the Song of Solomon to sanction one of the most untenable dogmas of his church.

THE NATIVITY.

We saw thee in thy balmy nest
  Bright dawn of our eternal day!
We saw thine eyes break from their east,
  And chase the trembling shades away.
We saw thee, and we blest the sight;
We saw thee by thine own sweet light.

Poor world (said I), what wilt thou do
  To entertain this starry stranger!
Is this the best thou canst bestow,
  A cold, and not too cleanly, manger?
Contend ye powers of heav'n and earth
To fit a bed for this huge birth.

Proud world (said I), cease your contest,
  And let the mighty Babe alone;
The phœnix builds the phœnix' nest,
  Love's architecture is all one;
The Babe whose birth embraves this morn,
Made his own bed ere he was born.

I saw the curl'd drops, soft and slow,
Come hovering o'er the place's head,
Offering their whitest sheets of snow,
To furnish the fair Infant's bed:
Forbear (said I), be not too bold,
Your fleece is white, but 'tis too cold.

I saw the obsequious Seraphims
Their rosy fleece of fire bestow,
For well they now can spare their wings,
Since Heaven itself lies here below:
Well done (said I); but are you sure
Your down, so warm, will pass for pure?

No, no, your King's not yet to seek
Where to repose his royal head;
See, see, how soon his new bloom'd cheek
'Twixt 's mother's breasts is gone to bed:
Sweet choice (said I), no way but so,
Not to lie cold, yet sleep in snow.

Yet when young April's husband showers
Shall bless the fruitful Maia's bed,
We'll bring the first-born of her flowers
To kiss thy feet, and crown thy head.
To thee, dread Lamb! whose love must keep
The shepherds more than they their sheep.

From a Hymn of the Nativity.

ON THE ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN MARY.

Hark! she is call'd, the parting hour is come:
Take thy farewell, poor world! heav'n must go home,
A piece of heav'nly earth, purer and brighter
Than the chaste stars, whose choice lamps come to light her,
While through the crystal orbs, clearer than they,
She climbs, and makes a far more milky way.
She's call'd. Hark! how the dear immortal dove
Sighs to his silver mate. Rise up my love,
Rise up my fair, my spotless one,
The winter's past, the rain is gone:
The spring is come, the flowers appear,
No sweets but thou are wanting here.
Come away my love,
Come away my dove,
Cast off delay:

The court of heav'n is come,
To wait upon thee home;
Come, come away.
—— The flowers appear,
Or quickly would, were thou once here.
The spring is come; or if it stay,
'Tis to keep time with thy delay.

TO THE MORNING.—SATISFACTION FOR SLEEP.

What succour can I hope the muse will send,
Whose drowsiness hath wrong'd the muse's friend?
What hope, Aurora, to propitiate thee,
Unless the muse sing my apology?
O, in that morning of my shame when I
Lay folded up in sleep's captivity,
How at the sight did'st thou draw back thine eyes,
Into thy modest veil? how did'st thou rise
Twice dyed in thine own blushes, and did'st run
To draw the curtains, and awake the sun?
Who rousing his illustrious tresses came,
And seeing the loath'd object, hid for shame
His head in thy fair bosom, and still hides
Me from his patronage; I pray, he chides:
And pointing to dull Morpheus, bids me take
My own Apollo, try if I can make
His Lethe be my Helicon; and see
If Morpheus have a muse to wait on me.
Hence 'tis my humble fancy finds no wings,
No nimble rapture starts to heaven and brings
Enthusiastic flames, such as can give
Marrow to my plump genius, make it live
Drest in the glorious madness of a muse,
Whose feet can walk the milky way, and choose
Her starry throne; whose holy heats can warm
The grave, and hold up an exalted arm
To lift me from my lazy urn, to climb
Upon the stooping shoulders of old time,
And trace eternity.—But all is dead,
All these delicious hopes are buried
In the deep wrinkles of his angry brow,
Where mercy cannot find them: but, O! thou
Bright lady of the morn, pity doth lie
So warm in thy soft breast it cannot die.

Have mercy then, and when he next shall rise
O! meet the angry god, invade his eyes,
And stroke his radiant cheeks; one timely kiss
Will kill his anger, and revive my bliss.
So to the treasure of thy pearly dew,
Thrice will I pay three tears, to show how true
My grief is; so my wakeful lay shall knock
At th' oriental gates; and duly mock
The early lark's shrill orizons, to be
An anthem at the day's nativity.
And the same rosy-finger'd hand of thine,
That shuts night's dying eyes, shall open mine.
But thou, faint god of sleep, forget that I
Was ever known to be thy votary.
No more my pillow shall thine altar be,
Nor will I offer any more to thee
Myself a melting sacrifice; I'm born
Again a fresh child of the buxom morn,
Heir of the sun's first beams; why threat'st thou so?
Why dost thou shake thy leaden sceptre? go,
Bestow thy poppy upon wakeful woe,
Sickness, and sorrow, whose pale lids ne'er know
Thy downy finger: dwell upon their eyes,
Shut in their tears; shut out their miseries.

THE APOSTOLIC SPIRIT INVOKED.

O that it were as it was wont to be!
When thy old friends of fire, all full of thee
Fought against frowns with smiles, gave glorious chase
To persecutions, and against the face
Of death, and fiercest dangers, durst with brave
And sober pace, march on to meet a grave.
On their bold breasts about the world they bore thee,
And to the teeth of hell stood up to teach thee;
In centre of their inmost souls they wore thee,
Where racks and torments strived in vain to reach thee.
Little, alas! thought they
Who tore the fair breasts of thy friends,
Their fury but made way
For thee; and served therein thy glorious ends.

The year of this poet's birth cannot be ascertained. He was descended from the ancient family of Carew, in Devonshire; and after having spent some time at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, he perfected his education by foreign travel. At his return, he became a favourite at court on account of his elegance, wit, and talents, and was patronized by Charles I., who appointed him Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, and Sewer in Ordinary. He was held in high estimation by the literary characters of the day, and his merits are honourably recorded by Clarendon in his Life and Continuation. Carew died in 1639.

TO THE NEW YEAR, FOR THE COUNTESS OF CARLISLE.

Give Lucinda pearl nor stone,
Lend them light who else have none:
Let her beauty shine alone.

Gums nor spice bring from the east,
For the Phœnix in her breast
Builds his funeral pile and nest.

No rich 'tire thou canst invent
Shall to grace her form be sent;
She adorns all ornament.

Give her nothing, but restore
Those sweet smiles which heretofore
In her cheerful eyes she wore.

Drive those envious clouds away,
Veils that have o'ercast my day,
And eclipsed her brighter ray.

Let the royal Goth mow down
This year's harvest with his own
Sword, and spare Lucinda's frown.

Janus, if, when next I trace
Those sweet lines, I in her face
Read the charter of my grace;

Then, from bright Apollo's tree,
Such a garland wreath'd shall be
As shall crown both her and thee.

THE PROTESTATION.

A SONNET.

No more shall meads be deck'd with flowers,
Nor sweetness dwell in rosy bowers;
Nor greenest buds on branches spring,
Nor warbling birds delight to sing;
Nor April violets paint the grove,
If I forsake my Celia's love.

The fish shall in the ocean burn,
And fountains sweet shall bitter turn;
The humble oak no flood shall know
When floods shall highest hills o'erflow;
Black Lethe shall oblivion leave,
If e'er my Celia I deceive.

Love shall his bow and shaft lay by,
And Venus' doves want wings to fly;
The sun refuse to show his light,
And day shall then be turn'd to night,
And in that night no star appear,
If once I leave my Celia dear.

Love shall no more inhabit earth,
Nor lovers more shall love for worth;
Nor joy above in heaven dwell,
Nor pain torment poor souls in hell;
Grim death no more shall horrid prove,
If e'er I leave bright Celia's love.

THE PRIMROSE.

Ask me why I send you here
This firstling of the infant year;
Ask me why I send to you
This primrose all bepearl'd with dew;
I straight will whisper in your ears,
The sweets of love are wash'd with tears.
Ask me why this flower doth show
So yellow, green, and sickly too;
Ask me why the stalk is weak,
And bending, yet it doth not break;
I must tell you, these discover
What doubts and fears are in a lover.

ELEGY ON LADY MARIA WENTWORTH, ELDEST DAUGHTER OF THOMAS, EARL OF CLEVELAND.

And here the precious dust is laid,
Whose purely-temper'd clay was made
So fine, that it the guest betray'd.

Else the soul grew so fast within,
It broke the outward shell of sin,
And so was hatch'd a cherubin.

In height it soar'd to God above,
In depth it did to knowledge move,
And spread in breadth to general love.

Before, a pious duty shined
To parents; courtesy, behind;
On either side, an equal mind.

Good to the poor, to kindred dear,
To servants kind, to friendship clear,
To nothing but herself severe.

So though a virgin, yet a bride
To every grace, she justified
A chaste polygamy, and died.

Learn from hence (reader) what small trust
We owe this world, where Virtue must,
Frail as our flesh, crumble to dust.

EPITAPH ON THE LADY MARY VILLERS.

This little vault, this narrow room,
Of love and beauty is the tomb:
The dawning beam, that 'gan to clear
Our clouded sky, lies darken'd here,
For ever set to us, by death
Sent to inflame the world beneath.
'Twas but a bud, yet did contain
More sweetness than shall spring again;
A budding star, that might have grown
Into a sun, when it had blown.
This hopeful beauty did create
New life in Love's declining state;
But now his empire ends, and we
From fire and wounding darts are free;
His brand, his bow, let no man fear,
The flames, the arrows, all lie here.

Sir John Suckling was born at Witham, in Middlesex, in 1609. His early life had something marvellous in it, according to his contemporaries, who related strange instances of the precocity of his talents, so that at fifteen he must have been a genius of no common mark. Nor was his youth without enterprise and adventure; for before he had finished his twentieth year, he had travelled through a considerable part of Europe visited its principal Courts, and served as a volunteer under the great Gustavus Adolphus in several engagements. On his return to England, young, gay, and accomplished, and with a high reputation, he naturally became a universal favourite, and basked in the smiles of the court, until the civil war commenced, when he joined the unfortunate Charles I., with a hundred horsemen magnificently equipped at his own expense. But this gay troop was too fine for active service, and only excited the derision of both friends and enemies. He was so active an adherent of the king, however, that the House of Commons was about to arrest him, upon which he fled to France. On the way to Paris, his servant robbed him at an inn while he slept; and knowing the ardent temper of his master, the villain stuck the blade of a small knife into one of Sir John's boots. When the knight awoke, he booted himself in haste to pursue the fugitive; but a wound was the consequence, of which he died on the 7th of May, 1641.

The poetry of Sir John Suckling is light, gay, and sparkling, like that which was afterwards cultivated at the Restoration; but, like it also, it is not merely stained, but embued, with an irreligious and licentious spirit. His productions, therefore, which were universally prized during the period of Charles II., can only afford for the general reading of the present age a few carefully selected extracts.

SONG.

No, no, fair heretic, it needs must be
But an ill love in me,
And worse for thee;
For were it in my power
To love thee now this hour,
More than I did the last;
I would then so fall
I might not love at all;
Love that can flow, and can admit increase,
Admits as well an ebb, and may grow less.

True love is still the same; the torrid zones,
And those more frigid ones
It must not know;
For love grown cold or hot
Is lust or friendship, not
The thing we have,
For that's a flame would die
Held down, or up too high:
Then think I love more than I can express,
And would love more, could I but love thee less.

DESCRIPTION OF A BRIDE.

But wot you what? the youth was going
To make an end of all his wooing;
The parson for him staid:
Yet by his leave, for all his haste,
He did not so much wish all past
(Perchance) as did the maid.

The maid—and thereby hangs a tale—
For such a maid no Whitson ale
Could ever yet produce:
No grape that's kindly ripe, could be
So round, so plump, so soft, as she,
Nor half so full of juice.

Her finger was so small, the ring
Would not stay on which they did bring,
It was too wide a peck:
And to say truth (for out it must)
It look'd like the great collar (just)
About our young colt's neck.

Her feet beneath her petticoat,
Like little mice stole in and out,
As if they fear'd the light:
But oh! she dances such a way!
No sun upon an Easter Day,
Is half so fine a sight.

Her cheeks so rare a white was on,
No daizy makes comparison
(Who sees them is undone),
For streaks of red were mingled there,
Such as are on a Katherine pear,
The side that 's next the sun.

Her lips were red, and one was thin
Compared to that was next her chin,
Some bee had stung it newly.
But (Dick) her eyes so guard her face,
I durst no more upon them gaze,
Than on the sun in July.

Her mouth so small when she does speak,
Thou'dst swear her teeth her words did break,
That they might passage get,
But she so handled still the matter,
They came as good as ours, or better,
And are not spent a whit.

SIEGE OF A HEART.

Tis now, since I sat down before
That foolish fort, a heart,
(Time strangely spent!) a year and more,
And still I did my part.

Made my approaches, from her hand
Unto her lip did rise,
And did already understand
The language of her eyes.

Proceeded on with no less art,
My tongue was engineer;
I thought to undermine the heart
By whispering in the ear.

When this did nothing, I brought down
Great cannon oaths, and shot
A thousand thousand to the town,
And still it yielded not.

I then resolved to starve the place
By cutting off all kisses,
Praising and gazing on her face,
And all such little blisses.

To draw her out, and from her strength,
I drew all batteries in:
And brought myself to lie at length
As if no siege had been.

When I had done what man could do,
And thought the place mine own,
The enemy lay quiet too,
And smiled at all was done.

I sent to know from whence and where,
These hopes, and this relief?
A spy inform'd, Honour was there,
And did command in chief.

March, march (quoth I), the word straight give,
Let's lose no time, but leave her;
That giant upon air will live,
And hold it out for ever.

To such a place our camp remove
As will not siege abide;
I hate a fool that starves her love
Only to feed her pride.

SONG.

I pr'ythee spare me, gentle boy!
Press me no more for that slight toy,
That foolish trifle of an heart;
I swear it will not do its part,
Though thou dost thine, employ'st thy power and art.

For through long custom it has known
The little secrets, and is grown
Sullen and wise, will have its will,
And, like old hawks, pursues that still
Which makes least sport, flies only where't can kill.

Some youth that has not made his story,
Will think perchance the pain 's the glory;
And mannerly sit out Love's feast;
I shall be carving of the best,
Rudely call for the last course 'fore the rest.

And oh! when once that course is past,
How short a time the feast doth last!
Men rise away, and scarce say grace,
Or civilly once thank the face
That did invite; but seek another place.

PERJURY EXCUSED.

Alas, it is too late! I can no more
Love now, than I loved before
My Flora, 'tis my fate, not I;
And what you call contempt, is destiny.
I am no monster sure, I cannot shew
Two hearts, one I already owe:
And I have bound myself with oaths, and vow'd
Oft'ner, I fear, than heaven has e'er allow'd,
That faces now should work no more on me,
Than if they could not charm, or I not see.
And shall I break 'em? shall I think you can
Love, if I could, so foul a perjured man?
Oh no, 'tis equally impossible that I
Should love again, or you love perjury.

This indefatigable author, who was by turns soldier, projector, theatrical manager, and political envoy, was born at Oxford in 1605, and was the son of an innkeeper, who was also mayor of that city. At the age of sixteen, he was entered a member of Lincoln College, where poetry allured his attention to the exclusion of logic, and other severe branches of scholarship. His stay at the University, however, was brief, and, on leaving it, he came to London, like the other fortune-hunting youths of that stirring age, in quest of patronage and advancement. Here, after several changes, he commenced writer for the stage; and his efforts in this department secured him the approbation of the wits of the day, as well as the patronage of several influential persons, so that after the death of Ben Jonson, he was promoted to the Laureateship in 1638. The civil war, however, soon interrupted the tuneful avocations of the poet, and Davenant, taking up arms in behalf of the royal cause, behaved so gallantly at the siege of Gloucester, that he received the honour of knighthood. On the ruin of his party he fled to France, and was employed as an envoy between the Queen and Charles I. At last, by the advice of her Majesty, he collected a body of unemployed artificers, with whom he embarked for the loyal colony of Virginia; but he was intercepted by an English ship of war, and sent prisoner to Cowes Castle in the Isle of Wight, with the disagreeable prospect of being arraigned, and executed as a traitor. Such, however, was his energy of character, that with death continually confronting him, he employed the hours of captivity in continuing the heroic poem of Gondibert, the two first books of which he had previously written in Paris. At the earnest intercession of several influential persons of the Republican party, to whom he had shown kindness during the civil war, he received a full pardon; and on being set at large, he resumed his dramatic occupations of theatrical manager and dramatic author, which he continued till his death. He died on the 7th of April, 1668, and was interred in Westminster Abbey. The poetical reputation of Davenant chiefly depends upon his Gondibert, an unfinished heroic or rather romantic poem, a work rich in poetical beauties, but which has been suffered to fall into neglect on account of the measure in which it is written, and the eccentricities of sentiment and style with which it is often disfigured.

BENEFIT OF POETRY.

By what bold passion am I rudely led,
  Like Fame's too curious and officious spy,
Where I these rolls in her dark closet read,
  Where worthies wrapp'd in Time's disguises lie?

Why should we now their shady curtains draw,
  Who by a wise retirement hence are freed,
And gone to lands exempt from Nature's law,
  Where Love no more can mourn, or Valour bleed?

Why to this stormy world from their long rest,
  Are these recall'd to be again displeased,
Where, during Nature's reign, we are opprest,
  Till we by Death's high privilege are eased?

Is it to boast that verse has chemic pow'r,
And that its rage (which is productive heat)
Can these revive, as chemists raise a flow'r,
Whose scatter'd parts their glass presents complete?

Though in these worthies gone, valour and love,
Did chastely as in sacred temples meet,
Such revived patterns us no more improve
Than flow'rs so raised by chemists make us sweet.

Yet when the soul's disease we desp'rate find,
Poets the old renown'd physicians are,
Who for the sickly habits of the mind,
Examples as the ancient cure prepare.

And bravely then physicians honour gain,
When to the world diseases cureless seem,
And they (in science valiant) ne'er refrain
Art's war with nature, till they life redeem.

But poets their accustom'd task have long
Forborne (who for examples did disperse
The heroes' virtues in heroic song),
And now think virtue sick, past cure of verse.

Yet to this desp'rate cure I will proceed,
Such patterns show as shall not fail to move;
Shall teach thee valiant patience when they bleed,
And hapless lovers constancy in love.

As rivers to their ruin hasty be,
So life (still earnest, loud, and swift) runs post
To the vast gulf of death, as they to sea,
And vainly travels to be quickly lost.

From Gondibert: Book I. Canto IV.

DESCRIPTION OF A LEADER.

For aid of action he obedience taught,
And silent patience for affliction's cure;
He praised my courage when I boldly fought,
But said, they conquer most, that most endure.

The toils of diligence as much approved
As valour's self, or th' arts her practice gains;
The care of men, more than of glory, loved;
Success rewarded, and successless pains.

To joyful victors quenching waters sent,
Delightful wine to their lamenting slaves;
For feasts have more brave lives than famine spent,
And temp'rance more than trench or armour saves.

Valour his mistress, Caution was his friend;
Both to their diff'rent seasons he applied;
The first he loved, on th' other did depend;
The first made worth uneasy by her pride.

He to submiss devotion more was giv'n
After a battle gain'd, than ere 'twas fought;
As if it nobler were to thank high Heav'n
For favours past, than bow for bounty sought.

From Gondibert: Book I. Canto VI.

CONSCIENCE.

For though the plain judge, Conscience, makes no show,
But silently to her dark session comes,
Not as red law does to arraignment go,
Or war to execution with loud drums;

Though she on hills sets not her gibbets high,
Where frightful law sets her's; nor bloody seems
Like war in colours spread, yet secretly
She does her work, and many men condemns.

Choaks in the seed, what law till ripe ne'er sees;
What law would punish, conscience can prevent;
And so the world from many mischiefs frees;
Known by her cures, as law by punishment.

From Gondibert: Book II. Canto I.

SONG.

The lark now leaves his wat'ry nest,
And, climbing, shakes his dewy wings;
He takes this window for the east;
And to implore your light, he sings,
Awake, awake, the morn will never rise,
Till she can dress her beauty at your eyes.

The merchant bows unto the seaman's star,
The ploughman from the sun his season takes;
But still the lover wonders what they are,
Who look for day before his mistress wakes.
Awake, awake, break through your vails of lawn!
Then draw your curtains, and begin the dawn.

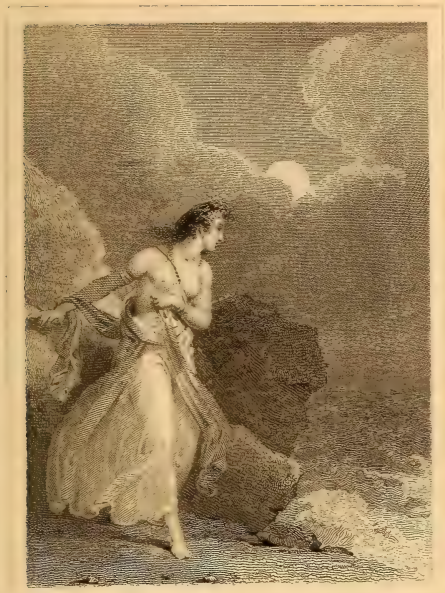
EPITAPH ON MRS. KATHERINE CROSS, BURIED IN FRANCE.

Within this hallow'd ground this seed is sown,
Of such a flow'r, though fall'n ere fully blown,
As will when doom (the saint's first spring) appears,
Be sweet as those which heaven's choice bosom wears.
Sweeter in wither'd death than fresh flow'rs are;
And through death's foul and frightful vizard fair;
As calm in life as others in death's shade:
So silent, that her tongue seem'd only made
For precepts, weigh'd as those in wisest books:
Yet nought that silence lost us; for her looks
Persuaded more than others by their speech,
Yet more by deeds than words she loved to teach.
This fair flower's seed let none remove till doom;
No, though to make some great dead princess room.
The world's triumphant courts prefer high birth;
But saints in death's low palace, under earth,
May claim chief place; she was a stranger here,
And born within opinion's giddy sphere;
A land where many, whilst they are alive,
Profanely for the style of saintship strive
From others, and themselves as saints esteem;
Yet sainting after death, profaneness deem;
Thence, young, she from the sinful living fled
For safety here among the sinless dead.
Near to this blessed stranger's lowly tomb,
Who dares for neighbourhood presume to come?
Unless, as her religious proselyte,
Her mother challenge a just tenant's right.

He was born in St. Dunstan's parish, London, in 1618, and was the son of a citizen, who died before the birth of his son; but this bereavement of the future eminent poet was compensated by the care of Cowley's mother, who strained her scanty means to procure him a liberal education. For this sacrifice she was well rewarded, as she lived long enough to witness the distinction with which her son was ultimately crowned. The first impulse which the mind of Cowley received towards poetry, was from an accidental circumstance. In the window of his mother's apartment lay a copy of Spenser's Faery Queen; and over the pages of this work the young boy pored with such enthusiasm, that, as he tells us, he became irrecoverably a poet. And this spirit was not long in manifesting itself, for a volume of his poems was written and printed in his thirteenth year, among which was the tragical History of Pyramus and Thisbe, composed when he was only ten years old. While a mere school-boy, also, he produced a comedy called Love's Riddle, which was not published until he had removed to the University of Cambridge. At this seat of learning, his love of poetry continued to grow and strengthen, so that while still a young student, he composed the greater part of his Davideis, a work in which the literary materials alone indicate a high state of scholarship, and great diligence and application. At Cambridge, also, at the age of twenty, he published, besides Love's Riddle, a Latin comedy, entitled *Naufragium Joculare*. Thus, at a period when other poets are only beginning to try their powers, he had produced several works of great merit, and entitled himself to a distinguished station among the poets of England.

A period of public trouble and exertion ensued, that pervaded the peaceful haunts of learning, as well as the noisy courts of political controversy; and in 1643, Cowley, who was now Master of Arts, was ejected from the university by the parliament, on account of his adherence to the royal cause. In reward of this attachment to loyal principles, he obtained the favour of the chief royalists, and was appointed secretary to Lord Jermyn, at Paris, in consequence of which the letters between Charles I. and the Queen, passed through his hands. As his official duties expired in 1656, he returned to London, but shortly after his arrival he was apprehended and thrown into prison. He submitted however to the ruling powers, and was released. At the dissolution of the Protectorate, by the death of Oliver Cromwell, Cowley returned to France, and remained there till the Restoration, an event from which he expected a reward for all his labours and troubles. But this was the era of oblivion, and past benefits, as well as past injuries, were in a great measure forgotten. He retired with a spirit embittered by disappointment, first to Barn-elms, and afterwards to Chertsey, in Surrey. It is gratifying however to add, that after a short interval, he procured, through the interest of the Earl of St. Alban's (formerly Lord Jermyn) and the Duke of Buckingham, a lease of the Queen's lands upon such easy terms, as afforded him a comfortable revenue for the rest of his days. He died at the Porch House, in Chertsey, on the 28th of July, 1667, and was interred with great pomp in Westminster Abbey, a multitude of nobles attending the procession. Charles II., by whom the devoted poet had been so ungratefully requited, might be said to pronounce his funeral eulogium when he declared, That Cowley had not left a better man behind him in England.

The poetical works of Cowley, besides those already mentioned, were, The Mistress, The Chronicle, The Miscellanies, The Book of Plants, and Anacreontics. He belonged unfortunately to the metaphysical school of poetry, a class that appeared about the beginning of the seventeenth century, and whose productions abounded with far-fetched conceits and extravagant hyperboles, rather than truth and simplicity. This perversity, indeed, would of itself have been as short-lived as it was unnatural, had it not been for the sanction which it received from our poet, who exerted the utmost of his ingenuity to gratify and confirm the prevailing taste.. But notwithstanding these defects, with which Cowley is frequently chargeable, there is a fund of real nature and feeling, as well as of grandeur and beauty in his productions, which will always give them an eminent rank in the poetry of England.



COWLEY.

THE HEART FLED AGAIN.

False, foolish heart! didst thou not say,
  That thou would'st never leave me more?
Behold! again 'tis fled away,
  Fled as far from me as before.
  I strove to bring it back again;
I cried and hollow'd after it in vain.

Ev'n so the gentle Tyrian dame,
  When neither grief nor love prevail,
Saw the dear object of her flame,
  Th' ingrateful Trojan, hoist his sail:
  Aloud she call'd to him to stay;
The wind bore him and her lost words away.

The doleful Ariadne so,
On the wide shore forsaken stood:
"False Theseus, whither dost thou go?"
Afar false Theseus cut the flood.
But Bacchus came to her relief:
Bacchus himself's too weak to ease my grief.

Ah! senseless heart, to take no rest,
But travel thus eternally!
Thus to be froz'n in every breast!
And to be scorch'd in every eye!
Wandering about like wretched Cain,
Thrust out, ill-used, by all, but by none slain!

Well, since thou wilt not here remain,
I'll e'en to live without thee try;
My head shall take the greater pain,
And all thy duties shall supply:
I can more easily live, I know,
Without thee, than without a mistress thou.

From The Mistress.

THE CHRONICLE: A BALLAD.

Margarita first possest,
If I remember well, my breast,
Margarita first of all;
But when a while the wanton maid
With my restless heart had play'd,
Martha took the flying ball.

Martha soon did it resign
To the beauteous Catharine.
Beauteous Catharine gave place
(Though loth and angry she to part
With the possession of my heart)
To Eliza's conquering face.

Eliza till this hour might reign,
Had she not evil counsels ta'en.
Fundamental laws she broke,
And still new favourites she chose,
Till up in arms my passions rose,
And cast away her yoke.

*

Mary then, and gentle Anne,
Both to reign at once began;
Alternately they sway'd;
And sometimes Mary was the fair,
And sometimes Anne the crown did wear,
And sometimes both I' obey'd.

Another Mary then arose,
And did rigorous laws impose;
A mighty tyrant she!
Long, alas! should I have been
Under that iron-sceptred queen,
Had not Rebecca set me free.

When fair Rebecca set me free,
'Twas then a golden time with me:
But soon those pleasures fled;
For the gracious princess died,
In her youth and beauty's pride,
And Judith reigned in her stead.

One month, three days, and half an hour,
Judith held the sovereign power:
Wondrous beautiful her face!
But so weak and small her wit,
That she to govern was unfit,
And so Susanna took her place.

But when Isabella came,
Arm'd with a resistless flame,
And th' artillery of her eye;
Whilst she proudly march'd about,
Greater conquests to find out,
She beat out Susan by the bye.

But in her place I then obey'd
Black-eyed Bess, her viceroy-maid;
To whom ensued a vacancy:
Thousand worse passions then possest
The interregnum of my breast;
Bless me from such an anarchy!

Gentle Henrietta then,
And a third Mary, next began;
Then Joan, and Jane, and Audria;
And then a pretty Thomasine,
And then another Katharine,
And then a long *et cætera*.

But should I now to you relate,
The strength and riches of their state;
The powder, patches, and the pins,
The ribbons, jewels, and the rings,
The lace, the paint, and warlike things,
That make up all their magazines;

If I should tell the politic arts
To take and keep men's hearts;
The letters, embassies, and spies,
The frowns, and smiles, and flatteries,
The quarrels, tears, and perjuries,
(Numberless, nameless, mysteries!)

And all the little lime-twigs laid,
By Machiavel the waiting-maid—
I more voluminous should grow
(Chiefly if I like them should tell
All change of weathers that befell)
Than Holinshed or Stow.

But I will briefer with them be,
Since few of them were long with me.
An higher and a nobler strain
My present Emperess does claim,
Heleonora, first o' th' name;
Whom God grant long to reign!

From Sylva.

THE EPICURE

Underneath this myrtle shade,
On flowery beds supinely laid,
With odorous oils my head o'er-flowing,
And around it roses growing,
What should I do but drink away
The heat and troubles of the day?
In this more than kingly state
Love himself shall on me wait.
Fill to me, Love, nay fill it up;
And mingled cast into the cup
Wit, and mirth, and noble fires,
Vigorous health and gay desires.
The wheel of life no less will stay
In a smooth than rugged way:

Since it equally doth flee,
Let the motion pleasant be.
Why do we precious ointments shower?
Nobler wines why do we pour?
Beauteous flowers why do we spread,
Upon the monuments of the dead?
Nothing they but dust can show,
Or bones that hasten to be so.
Crown me with roses whilst I live,
Now your wines and ointments give;
After death I nothing crave,
Let me alive my pleasures have—
All are Stoics in the grave.

From Anacreontics.

DESTRUCTION OF THE FIRST-BORN OF EGYPT.

Of God's dreadful anger these
Were but the first light skirmishes;
The shock and bloody battle now begins,
The plenteous harvest of full-ripen'd sins.
It was the time when the still moon
Was mounted softly to her noon,
And dewy Sleep, which from Night's secret springs arose,
Gently as Nile the land o'erflows.
When lo! from the high countries of refined day,
The golden heaven without allay—
Whose dross, in the creation purged away,
Made up the sun's adulterate ray—
Michael, the warlike prince, does downwards fly,
Swift as the journeys of the sight,
Swift as the rays of light,
And with his winged will cuts through the yielding sky.
He pass'd through many a star, and, as he past,
Shone (like a star in them) more brightly there
Than they did in their sphere.
On a tall pyramid's pointed head he stopp'd at last,
And a mild look of sacred pity cast
Down on the sinful land where he was sent,
T' inflict the tardy punishment.
"Ah! yet," said he, "yet, stubborn king! repent,
Whilst thus unarm'd I stand,
Ere the keen sword of God fill my commanded hand;
Suffer but yet thyself, and thine to live:

Who would, alas! believe
That it for man," said he,
"So hard to be forgiven should be,
And yet for God so easy to forgive!"
He spoke, and downwards flew,
And o'er his shining form a well-cut cloud he threw,
Made of the blackest fleece of Night,
And close-wrought to keep in the powerful light,
Yet wrought so fine it hinder'd not his flight;
But through the key-holes and the chinks of doors,
And through the narrow'st walks of crooked pores,
He past more swift and free,
Than in wide air the wanton swallows flee.
He took a pointed Pestilence in his hand;
The spirits of thousand mortal poisons made
The strongly-temper'd blade,
The sharpest sword that e'er was laid
Up in the magazines of God to scourge a wicked land.
Through Egypt's wicked land his march he took,
And as he march'd the sacred first-born strook
Of every womb; none did he spare,
None, from the meanest beast to Cenchre's purple heir.
The swift approach of endless night
Breaks ope the wounded sleepers' rolling eyes;
They awake the rest with dying cries,
And darkness doubles the affright;
The mixed sounds of scatter'd deaths they hear,
And lose their parted souls 'twixt grief and fear.
Louder than all, the shrieking women's voice
Pierces this chaos of confused noise;
As brighter lightning cuts away
Clear and distinguish'd through the day.
With less complaints the Zoan temples sound,
When the adored heifer's drown'd,
And no true-mark'd successor to be found.
Whilst health, and strength, and gladness, doth possess
The festal Hebrew cottages;
The blest Destroyer comes not there,
To interrupt the sacred cheer
That new begins their well-reformed year:
Upon their doors he read and understood,
God's protection, writ in blood;
Well was he skill'd i' th' character Divine;
And, though he pass'd by it in haste,
He bow'd and worshipp'd, as he past,
The mighty mystery through its humble sign.

From The Plagues of Egypt.

THE BARGAIN.

Take heed, take heed, thou lovely maid,
Nor be by glittering ills betray'd;
Thyself for money! oh, let no man know
The price of beauty fall'n so low!
What dangers ought'st thou not to dread,
When love, that 's blind, is by blind Fortune led?

The foolish Indian, that sells
His precious gold for beads and bells,
Does a more wise and gainful traffic hold,
Than thou, who sell'st thyself for gold.
What gains in such a bargain are?
He'll in thy mines dig better treasures far.

Can gold, alas! with thee compare?
The sun, that makes it, 's not so fair;
The sun, which can nor make nor ever see
A thing so beautiful as thee,
In all the journeys he does pass,
Though the sea served him for a looking-glass.

Bold was the wretch that cheapen'd thee;
Since Magus, none so bold as he:
Thou 'rt so divine a thing, that thee to buy
Is to be counted simony;
Too dear he'll find his sordid price
Has forfeited that and the Benefice.

If it be lawful thee to buy,
There 's none can pay that rate but I;
Nothing on earth a fitting price can be,
But what on earth 's most like to thee;
And that my heart does only bear;
For there thyself, thy very self is there.

So much thyself does in me live,
That, when it for thyself I give,
'Tis but to change that piece of gold for this,
Whose stamp and value equal is;
And, that full weight too may be had,
My soul and body, two grains more, I'll add.

From The Mistress.

THE DAUGHTERS OF SAUL.

Like two bright eyes in a fair body placed,
Saul's royal house two beauteous daughters graced:
Merab the first, Michal the younger, named;
Both equally for different glories famed.
Merab with spacious beauty fill'd the sight,
But too much awe chastised the bold delight:
Like a calm sea, which to th' enlarged view
Gives pleasure, but gives fear and reverence too.
Michal's sweet looks clear and free joys did move,
And no less strong, though much more gentle, love:
Like virtuous kings, whom men rejoice t' obey
(Tyrants themselves less absolute than they).
Merab appear'd like some fair princely tower;
Michal, some virgin-queen's delicious bower.
All Beauty's stores in little and in great;
But the contracted beams shot fiercest heat.
A clean and lively brown was Merab's dye,
Such as the prouder colours might envy:
Michal's pure skin shone with such taintless white,
As scatter'd the weak rays of human sight;
Her lips and cheeks a nobler red did shew,
Than e'er on fruits or flowers heaven's pencil drew;
From Merab's eyes fierce and quick lightnings came—
From Michal's, the sun's mild, yet active, flame:
Merab's long hair was glossy chesnut brown;
Tresses of palest gold did Michal crown.
Such was their outward form; and one might find
A difference not unlike it in the mind.
Merab with comely majesty and state
Bore high th' advantage of her worth and fate;
Such humble sweetness did soft Michal show,
That none who reach so high e'er stoop'd so low.
Merab rejoiced in her wrack'd lovers' pain,
And fortified her virtue with disdain:
The griefs she caused, gave gentle Michal grief
(She wish'd her beauties less, for their relief);
Ev'n to her captives civil; yet th' excess
Of naked virtue guarded her no less.
Business and power Merab's large thoughts did vex;
Her wit disdain'd the fetters of her sex:
Michal no less disdain'd affairs and noise,
Yet did it not from ignorance, but choice.
In brief, both copies were more sweetly drawn;
Merab of Saul, Michal of Jonathan.

From the Davideis.

Sir John Denham was born at Dublin, in 1615, and was the only son of Sir John Denham, Chief Baron of the Exchequer in Ireland. When only two years old the future poet was brought to England, and after having received the elements of education in London, he was sent in 1631 to Oxford. In 1642 he published the Sophy, a work that strongly excited the public attention, and in the following year his Cooper's Hill, that tended still more highly to exalt his reputation. Sir John's station in life obliged him to take a share in public affairs, and on the discomfiture of the royal cause, he was appointed, in 1648, to convey James, the young Duke of York, from London to France, an office which he safely accomplished. While he resided in the latter country with the royal family of England, he helped to enliven their melancholy with his occasional verses. At the Restoration, he was one of the few suffering Loyalists who benefited by the change, as he was decorated with the Order of the Bath, and appointed Surveyer of the King's Buildings. He died on the 19th of March, 1668, and was buried by the side of his friend, Cowley.

Sir John Denham, as a poet, is not only of a superior order, but he has also the distinguished merit of being one of the Fathers of English verse, on account of the regularity and harmony of which he first set the example.

THE THAMES.

Parting from thence 'twixt anger, shame, and fear,
Those for what 's past, and this for what 's too near,
My eye descending from the hill, surveys
Where Thames among the wanton valleys strays:
Thames, the most loved of all the Ocean's sons
By his old sire, to his embraces runs;
Hasting to pay his tribute to the sea,
Like mortal life to meet eternity.
Though with those streams he no resemblance hold,
Whose foam is amber, and their gravel gold;
His genuine and less guilty wealth t' explore,
Search not his bottom, but survey his shore;
O'er which he kindly spreads his spacious wing,
And hatches plenty for th' ensuing spring.
Nor then destroys it with too fond a stay,
Like mothers which their infants overlay.
Nor with a sudden and impetuous wave,
Like profuse kings, resumes the wealth he gave.
No unexpected inundations spoil
The mower's hopes, nor mock the ploughman's toil:
But god-like his unwearied bounty flows;
First loves to do, then loves the good he does.
Nor are his blessings to his banks confined,
But free and common, as the sea or wind;
When he, to boast or to disperse his stores
Full of the tributes of his grateful shores,
Visits the world, and in his flying towers
Brings home to us, and makes both Indies ours;

Finds wealth where 'tis, bestows it where it wants,
Cities in deserts, woods in cities plants.
So that to us no thing, no place is strange,
While his fair bosom is the world's exchange.
O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
My great example, as it is my theme!
Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full:
Heaven her Eridanus no more shall boast,
Whose fame in thine, like lesser current, 's lost;
Thy nobler streams shall visit Jove's abodes,
To shine among the stars, and bathe the gods.

From Cooper's Hill

A SONG.

Morpheus, the humble God, that dwells
In cottages and smoky cells,
Hates gilded roofs and beds of down;
And though he fears no prince's frown,
Flies from the circle of a crown.

Come, I say, thou powerful God,
And thy leaden charming rod,
Dipt in the Lethéan lake,
O'er his wakeful temples shake,
Lest he should sleep, and never wake.

Nature (alas), why art thou so
Obliged to thy greatest foe?
Sleep that is thy best repast,
Yet of death it bears a taste,
And both are the same thing at last.

ON THE GAME OF CHESS.

A tablet stood of that abstersive tree,
  Where Æthiop's swarthy bird did build her nest,
Inlaid it was with Libyan ivory,
  Drawn from the jaws of Afric's prudent beast.
Two kings like Saul, much taller than the rest,
  Their equal armies draw into the field;
Till one take th' other prisoner they contest;
  Courage and fortune must to conduct yield.

This game the Persian Magi did invent,
The force of Eastern wisdom to express;
From thence to busy Europeans sent,
And styled by modern Lombards pensive Chess:
Yet some that fled from Troy to Rome report,
Penthesilea Priam did oblige;
Her Amazons, his Trojans taught this sport,
To pass the tedious hours of ten years' siege.
There she presents herself, whilst kings and peers
Look gravely on whilst fierce Bellona fights;
Yet maiden modesty her motions steers,
Nor rudely skips o'er bishops' heads like knights.

HOMER.

I can no more believe old Homer blind,
Than those, who say the sun hath never shined;
The age wherein he lived was dark, but he
Could not want sight, who taught the world to see:
They who Minerva from Jove's head derive,
Might make old Homer's skull the Muses' hive;
And from his brain that Helicon distil
Whose racy liquor did his offspring fill.
Nor old Anacreon, Hesiod, Theocrite,
Must we forget, nor Pindar's lofty flight.
Old Homer's soul, at last from Greece retired,
In Italy the Mantuan swain inspired.

From The Progress of Learning.

COWLEY.

Old mother Wit, and Nature, gave
Shakspeare and Fletcher all they have;
In Spenser, and in Jonson, Art
Of slower Nature got the start;
But both in him so equal are,
None knows which bears the happiest share:
To him no author was unknown,
Yet what he wrote was all his own;
Horace's wit, and Virgil's state,
He did not steal, but emulate!
And when he would like them appear,
Their garb, but not their clothes, did wear.

From the Elegy on Mr. Abraham Cowley's Death, and Burial amongst the ancient Poets.

This boast of his country, who, with Homer and Virgil, completes the poetical triumvirate which Nature took three thousand years to produce, was the son of a respectable scrivener in London, where he was born on the 9th of December, 1608. He was distinguished in his early days for a love of learning, in which he made great proficiency; and even while still a youth, he wrote several poetical pieces of distinguished excellence. But these, compared with his future productions, and especially with his Paradise Lost, were like the first flights of the young eagle before it learns to ascend above the clouds, and look steadily upon the sun. In his sixteenth year, he was sent to Christ's College, Cambridge, where he took the degrees of Bachelor and Master; but the system of discipline which prevailed at that time excited his disgust: he accordingly left the University, and returned to his father's house, where he perfected himself in classical literature by intense self-application. During this period, also, he produced the mask of Comus, the elegy of Lycidas, and probably Arcades. After this, he left England in 1638, for a continental tour, during the course of which he visited Paris, Florence, Sienna, Rome, and Naples, and intended to have continued his travels through Sicily and Greece, when the troubles in England that preceded the civil war obliged him to alter his intentions; and being an ardent admirer of civil liberty, he returned to London after an absence of fifteen months, to aid his countrymen in contending for their rights. With this view, he sacrificed for a time his more congenial poetical pursuits for political controversy, and published several powerful pamphlets, in which he successfully refuted the arguments of the Royalist party.

During this period, Milton taught a school, by which he was enabled to support his relations, who had been impoverished by the civil war. He was afterwards appointed Latin Secretary to the Parliament, in which capacity he was employed to defend the establishment of the new Commonwealth, and justify its measures, a labour which he pursued so earnestly, that in his celebrated controversy with Salmasius he lost his eyesight. He was continued in office by Oliver Cromwell, and notwithstanding his blindness, was still able to pursue his official and controversial duties. In this manner he laboured to his forty-seventh year, when he retired from the bustle of politics, to meditate upon that great attempt which he had never lost sight of, and which was of more importance than a thousand political controversies—the composition of an Epic poem that would redound to the glory of his country. His choice for a long time seems to have wavered between the History of Prince Arthur, and the subject of Paradise Lost, when, happily for the world and his own fame, he decided upon the latter, and began

"Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme."

After so prodigious an effort of genius as the production of Paradise Lost, the active mind of Milton did not repose upon its past labours. When this great Epic was finished, he had shown it to Elwood the quaker, who observed to him—'Thou hast said a great deal upon Paradise Lost; what hast thou to say upon Paradise found?' Upon this hint the poet resumed his labours, and in 1667 appeared Paradise Regained, and Samson Agonistes. After this period, his time was chiefly occupied in writing treatises upon miscellaneous subjects until he had reached his sixty-sixth year, when his constitution was broken under repeated attacks of the gout, and he died on the 10th of November, 1674.

The fate of Paradise Lost, at the period of its publication, and for some time afterwards, is generally known. The poet sold the copy of this immortal work for 15*l.*; and yet the bargain threatened to be a losing one to the publisher, from the very tardy sale that followed. During the reign of Charles II., the royalist and literary taste that predominated equally eschewed religious and republican poetry; and it was only after the lapse of time, and through the recommendatory criticisms of such leaders of the popular mind as Dryden and Addison, that public attention was awakened in its behalf. But this once secured, the success of Paradise Lost could no longer be retarded. The eyes that were opened were compelled to see the light; and Milton, by common consent, was recognised and acclaimed as the great national poet of his country.



Ransen.

MILTON.

INVITATION OF COMUS TO THE LADY.

Why are you vext, Lady? why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far: See here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose season.
And first behold this cordial julep here,
That flames, and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spirits of balm, and fragrant syrups mix'd.
Not that Nepenthes, which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.

Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs which Nature lent
For gentle usage, and soft delicacy?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal like an ill borrower
With that which you received on other terms,
Scorning the unexempt condition
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
That have been tired all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted; but, fair Virgin,
This will restore all soon.

From Comus, a Mask.

SAMSON'S LAMENTATION FOR HIS BLINDNESS.

O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!
Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,
Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age!
Light the prime work of God to me' is extinct,
And all her various objects of delight
Annull'd, which might in part my grief have eased,
Inferior to the vilest now become
Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me,
They creep, yet see, I dark in light exposed
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,
Within doors, or without, still as a fool,
In power of others, never in my own;
Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.
O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse
Without all hope of day!
O first-created Beam, and thou great Word,
"Let there be light," and light was over all;
Why am I thus bereaved thy prime decree?
The sun to me is dark
And silent as the moon,
When she deserts the night
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
Since light so necessary is to life,
And almost life itself, if it be true
That light is in the soul,
She all in every part; why was the sight
To such a tender ball as th' eye confined,
So obvious and so easy to be quench'd?

*

And not, as feeling, through all parts diffused,
That she might look at will through every pore?
Then had I not been thus exiled from light,
As in the land of darkness yet in light,
To live a life half dead, a living death,
And buried; but O yet more miserable!
Myself, my sepulchre, a moving grave,
Buried, yet not exempt
By privilege of death and burial
From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs,
But made hereby obnoxious more
To all the miseries of life,
Life in captivity
Among inhuman foes.

From Samson Agonistes.

HYMN ON THE NATIVITY.

It was the winter wild,
While the Heav'n-born child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
Nature in awe to him
Had dofft her gawdy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun her lusty paramour.

Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow,
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw,
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

But he her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace;
She crown'd with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing,
And waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes an universal peace through sea and land.

No war, or battel's sound
Was heard the world around:
  The idle spear and shield were high up hung,
The hooked chariot stood,
Unstain'd with hostile blood,
  The trumpet spake not to the armed throng,
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of light
  His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds with wonder whist
Smoothly the waters kist,
  Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed
    wave.

The stars with deep amaze
Stand fix'd in stedfast gaze,
  Bending one way their precious influence,
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,
  Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow,
Until their Lord himself bespake and bid them go.

And though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
  The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferior flame
  The new enlighten'd world no more should need;
He saw a greater sun appear
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could bear.

The shepherds on the lawn,
Or e'er the point of dawn,
  Sat simply chatting in a rustic row;
Full little thought they then,
That the mighty Pan
  Was kindly come to live with them below;
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet,
  As never was by mortal finger strook,
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringed noise,
  As all their souls in blissful rapture took:
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heav'nly close.

Nature that heard such sound,
Beneath the hollow round
  Of Cynthia's seat, the aery region thrilling,
Now was almost won
To think her part was done,
  And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all Heav'n and Earth in happier union.

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
  That with long beams the shame-faced night arrayed;
The helmed Cherubim,
And sworded Seraphim,
  Are seen in glittering ranks with wings display'd,
Harping in loud and solemn quire,
With unexpressive notes to Heaven's new-born Heir.

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
  But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set,
  And the well-balanced world on hinges hung,
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

Ring out, ye crystal Spheres,
Once bless our human ears
  (If ye have power to touch our senses so),
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time,
  And let the base of Heaven's deep organ blow,
And with your ninefold harmony
Make up full consort to th' angelic symphony.

For if such holy song
Inwrap our fancy long,
  Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold,
And speckled Vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
  And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mold,
And Hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
  Orb'd in a rainbow: and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between,
Throned in celestial sheen,
  With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering,
And Heav'n, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

But wisest Fate says no,
This must not yet be so,
  The babe lies yet in smiling infancy,
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss;
  So both himself and us to glorify:
Yet first to those ychain'd in sleep,
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the
      deep,

With such a horrid clang
As on mount Sinai rang,
  While the red fire and smouldering clouds outbrake:
The aged earth aghast,
With terror of that blast,
  Shall from the surface to the centre shake;
When at the world's last session,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his throne.

And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,
  But now begins; for from this happy day
Th' old Dragon under ground,
In straiter limits bound,
  Not half so far casts his usurped sway,
And wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swinges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

The oracles are dumb,
No voice or hideous hum
  Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving;
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
  With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

The lonely mountains o'er,
And the resounding shore,
  A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;
From haunted spring and dale
Edged with poplar pale,
  The parting Genius is with sighing sent;
With flower-inwoven tresses torn
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In consecrated earth,
And on the holy hearth,
  The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint;
In urns, and altars round,
A drear and dying sound
  Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar power foregoes his wonted seat.

Peor and Baälim
Forsake their temples dim,
  With that twice-batter'd God of Palestine;
And mooned Ashtaroth,
Heav'n's queen and mother both,
  Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn,
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

And sullen Moloch fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
  His burning idol all of blackest hue;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
  In dismal dance about the furnace blue:
The brutish Gods of Nile as fast,
Isis and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove or green,
  Trampling the unshower'd grass with lowings loud;
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest,
  Nought but profoundest Hell can be his shroud;
In vain with timbrell'd anthems dark
The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipt ark.

He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded Infant's hand,
  The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyne;
Nor all the Gods beside
Longer dare abide,
  Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:
Our babe, to show his Godhead true,
Can in his swadling-bands control the damned crew.

So when the sun in bed,
Curtain'd with cloudy red,
  Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the infernal jail,
  Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several grave,
And the yellow-skirted Fays
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved maze

But see the Virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest,
  Time is our tedious song should here have ending:
Heaven's youngest teemed star
Hath fix'd her polish'd car,
  Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending:
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harnest Angels sit in order serviceable.

SATAN ADDRESSING THE FALLEN ANGELS.

Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed
Their dread commander: he above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent
Stood like a tow'r; his form had yet not lost
All her original brightness, nor appear'd

Less than Arch-Angel ruin'd, and the excess
Of glory obscured; as when the sun new risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon
In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darken'd so, yet shone
Above them all th' Arch-Angel: but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
(Far other once beheld in bliss), condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain,
Millions of Spirits for his fault amerced
Of Heav'n, and from eternal splendors flung
For his revolt, yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory wither'd: as when Heaven's fire
Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth though bare
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half inclose him round
With all his peers: attention held them mute.
Thrice he assay'd, and thrice in spite of scorn
Tears, such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last
Words interwove with sighs found out their way.

From Paradise Lost.

PANDEMONIUM.

Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave; nor did there want
Cornice or freeze, with bossy sculptures graven;
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon
Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
Equall'd in all their glories, to inshrine
Belus or Serapis their Gods, or seat
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile

Stood fix'd her stately highth, and strait the doors
Opening their brazen folds discover wide
Within, her ample spaces, o'er the smooth
And level pavement: from the arched roof
Pendent by subtle magic many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets fed
With Naphtha and Asphaltus yielded light
As from a sky.

From Paradise Lost.

OPENING OF THE GATES OF HELL.

Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
And tow'ards the gate rolling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up drew,
Which but herself not all the Stygian Powers
Could once have moved; then in the key-hole turns
Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
Unfastens: on a sudden open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut
Excell'd her power; the gates wide open stood,
That with extended wings a banner'd host
Under spread ensigns marching might pass through
With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;
So wide they stood, and like a furnace' mouth
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
Before their eyes in sudden view appear
The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension, where length, breadth, and highth,
And time, and place, are lost; where eldest Night
And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,
Strive here for mast'ry, and to battle bring
Their embryon atoms; they around the flag
Of each his faction, in their several clans,
Light-arm'd or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or slow,
Swarm populous, un-number'd as the sands
Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,

Levied to side with warring winds, and poise
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
He rules a moment; Chaos umpire sits,
And by decision more embroils the fray
By which he reigns: next him high arbiter
Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss,
The womb of nature and perhaps her grave,
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd
Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more worlds;
Into this wild abyss the wary Fiend
Stood on the brink of Hell and look'd a while,
Pond'ring his voyage; for no narrow frith
He had to cross.

From Paradise Lost.

SATAN'S SOLILOQUY ON FIRST BEHOLDING ADAM AND EVE.

O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!
Into our room of bliss thus high advanced
Creatures of other mold, earth-born perhaps,
Not Spirits, yet to heav'nly spirits bright
Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
In them divine resemblance, and such grace
The hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd.
Ah gentle pair, ye little think how nigh
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish and deliver ye to woe,
More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;
Happy, but for so happy ill secured
Long to continue, and this high seat your Heaven
Ill fenced for Heav'n to keep out such a foe
As now is enter'd; yet no purposed foe
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
Though I unpitied: League with you I seek,
And mutual amity so strait, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth; my dwelling haply may not please,
Like this fair Paradise, your sense, yet such
Accept your Maker's work; he gave it me,
Which I as freely give; Hell shall unfold,
To entertain you two, her widest gates,
And send forth all her kings; there will be room,

Not like these narrow limits, to receive
Your numerous offspring; if no better place,
Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge
On you who wrong me not for him who wrong'd.
And should I at your harmless innocence
Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
Honour and empire with revenge enlarged,
By conqu'ring this new world, compels me now
To do what else though damn'd I should abhor.
So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds.

From Paradise Lost.

EVE'S FIRST AWAKENING TO LIFE.

That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awaked, and found myself reposed
Under a shade on flow'rs, much wond'ring where
And what I was, whence thither brought and how.
Not distant far from thence a murm'ring sound
Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmoved
Pure as th' expanse of Heav'n; I thither went
With unexperienced thought, and laid me down
On the green bank, to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.
As I bent down to look, just opposite
A shape within the watery gleam appear'd,
Bending to look on me: I started back,
It started back; but pleased I soon return'd;
Pleased it return'd as soon with answ'ring looks
Of sympathy and love: there I had fix'd
Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warn'd me, What thou seest,
What there thou seest, fair Creature, is thyself;
With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
And I will bring thee where no shadow stays
Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he
Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy
Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
Multitudes like thyself, and thence be call'd
Mother of human race. What could I do,
But follow strait, invisibly thus led?
Till I espy'd thee, fair indeed and tall,
Under a platan; yet methought less fair,
Less winning soft, less amiably mild,

THIS poet, who shares with Denham the glory of having harmonized the versification of England, was born at Colshill in Hertfordshire, in 1605. He studied at King's College, Cambridge, and was admitted into parliament so early as his eighteenth, some even say his sixteenth, year. It is more gratifying, however, to contemplate his poetical, than his political career, for in the latter he seems to have been nothing more than a time-server, veering from the king to the parliament, and from the parliament to the king, as each might happen for the time to possess the ascendancy. But his crowning delinquency was his betraying his fellow-conspirators to save his own life, when their plot for the restoration of monarchy was detected. Although he thus meanly escaped the death to which they were sentenced, he was not set free till after the most abject submission, besides the payment of a penalty of ten thousand pounds. His subsequent consistency was worthy of his former career. He wrote a panegyric upon Cromwell, which is one of his best productions, and also a poem on his death; and upon the arrival of the Restoration, he composed a palinode in praise of Charles II. After having lived to a great age, he died on the 21st of October, 1687. His poetry, notwithstanding the celebrity it attained during his own age, and when the principles of harmonious versification were still imperfect, is too trivial in its subjects, as well as too nerveless in its general character, to be much appreciated in the present day. His rank perhaps may be best designated by the term of a third-rate poet.

ON HIS MAJESTY'S (CHARLES I.) RECEIVING THE NEWS OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM'S DEATH.

So earnest with thy God! Can no new care,
No sense of danger, interrupt thy prayer?
The sacred wrestler, till a blessing given,
Quits not his hold, but halting conquers Heaven:
Nor was the stream of thy devotion stopp'd,
When from the body such a limb was lopp'd,
As to thy present state was no less maim;
Though thy wise choice has since repair'd the same.
Bold Homer durst not so great virtue feign
In his best pattern: of Patroclus slain,
With such amazement as weak mothers use,
And frantic gesture, he receives the news.
Yet fell his darling by th' impartial chance
Of war, imposed by royal Hector's lance:
Thine in full peace, and by a vulgar hand
Torn from thy bosom, left his high command.
The famous painter could allow no place
For private sorrow in a Prince's face:
Yet, that his piece might not exceed belief,
He cast a veil upon supposed grief.
'Twas want of such a precedent as this,
Made the old heathen frame their Gods amiss.
Their Phœbus should not act a fonder part
For the fair boy, than he did for his hart:
Nor blame for Hyacinthus' fate his own,
That kept from him wish'd death, hadst thou been known.

He that with thine shall weigh good David's deeds,
Shall find his passion, nor his love, exceeds:
He curst the mountains where his brave friend died,
But let false Ziba with his heir divide:
Where thy immortal love to thy blest friends,
Like that of Heaven, upon their seed descends.
Such huge extremes inhabit thy great mind,
God-like, unmoved; and yet, like woman, kind!
Which of the ancient poets had not brought
Our Charles's pedigree from heaven; and taught
How some bright dame, comprest by mighty Jove,
Produced this mix'd Divinity and Love?

SONG.

Behold the brand of beauty tost!
See how the motion does dilate the flame!
Delighted Love his spoils does boast,
And triumph in this game.
Fire, to no place confined,
Is both our wonder, and our fear;
Moving the mind,
As lightning hurled through the air.

High heaven the glory does increase
Of all her shining lamps, this artful way:
The sun in figures, such as these,
Joys with the moon to play:
To the sweet strains they advance,
Which do result from their own spheres;
As this nymph's dance
Moves with the numbers which she hears.

UPON THE DEATH OF THE LORD PROTECTOR.

We must resign! Heaven his great soul doth claim
In storms, as loud as his immortal fame:
His dying groans, his last breath shakes our isle;
And trees uncut fall for his funeral pile:
About his palace their broad roots are tost
Into the air.—So Romulus was lost!
New Rome in such a tempest miss'd her king;
And, from obeying, fell to worshipping.
On Œta's top thus Hercules lay dead,
With ruin'd oaks and pines about him spread.

The poplar too, whose bough he wont to wear
On his victorious head, lay prostrate there.
Those his last fury from the mountain rent:
Our dying hero from the continent
Ravish'd whole towns; and forts from Spaniards reft,
As his last legacy to Britain left.
The ocean, which so long our hopes confined,
Could give no limits to his vaster mind;
Our bounds' enlargement was his latest toil;
Nor hath he left us prisoners to our isle:
Under the tropic is our language spoke,
And part of Flanders hath received our yoke.
From civil broils he did us disengage;
Found nobler objects for our martial rage:
And, with wise conduct, to his country show'd
The ancient way of conquering abroad.
Ungrateful then! if we no tears allow
To him, that gave us peace and empire too.
Princes that fear'd him, grieve; concern'd to see
No pitch of glory from the grave is free.
Nature herself took notice of his death,
And, sighing, swell'd the sea with such a breath,
That, to remotest shores her billows roll'd,
Th' approaching fate of their great ruler told.

TO THE DUCHESS OF ORLEANS, WHEN SHE WAS TAKING LEAVE OF THE COURT AT DOVER.

That sun of beauty did among us rise,
England first saw the light of your fair eyes.
In English too your early wit was shown:
Favour that language! which was then your own,
When, though a child, through guards you made your way:
What fleet, or army, could an angel stay?
Thrice happy Britain! if she could retain,
Whom she first bred within her ambient Main.
Our late-burnt London, in apparel new,
Shook off her ashes to have treated you:
But we must see our glory snatch'd away,
And with warm tears increase the guilty sea:
No wind can favour us; howe'er it blows,
We must be wreck'd, and our dear treasure lose!
Sighs will not let us half our sorrows tell——
Fair, lovely, great, and best of nymphs, farewell!

This nobleman was the son of Henry, Earl of Rochester, and was born at Ditchley, Oxfordshire, in 1647. After having finished his studies at the University with reputation, he travelled into France and Italy. In 1665, he went to sea with Earl Sandwich, and distinguished himself in two instances during the war with Holland by remarkable courage and daring. On returning home, however, he belied these tokens by symptoms of cowardice, frequently involving his companions in street quarrels, and afterwards leaving them to shift for themselves. His life was a career of the most reckless intemperance, chequered with transient fits of study; and with a mind naturally of considerable power, his poetical productions were for the most part of such a licentious character, that even the profligate age in which they were produced was not hardy enough to save them from oblivion. He died from an exhausted constitution in 1680, at the early age of thirty-four, and during his last days his penitence was as remarkable as his profligacy.

UPON DRINKING IN A BOWL.

Vulcan, contrive me such a cup
  As Nestor used of old;
Show all thy skill to trim it up,
  Damask it round with gold.

Make it so large, that, fill'd with sack
  Up to the swelling brim,
Vast toasts on the delicious lake,
  Like ships at sea, may swim.

Engrave not battle on his cheek;
  With war I've nought to do;
I'm none of those that took Mæstrick,
  Nor Yarmouth leaguer knew.

Let it no name of planets tell,
  Fix'd stars, or constellations:
For I am no Sir Sidrophel,
  Nor none of his relations.

But carve thereon a spreading vine:
  Then add two lovely boys;
Their limbs in amorous folds intwine,
  The type of future joys.

Cupid and Bacchus my saints are,
  May drink and love still reign!
With wine I wash away my cares,
  And then to Love again.

UPON NOTHING.

Nothing! thou elder brother ev'n to Shade,
That hadst a being ere the world was made,
And (well fixt) art alone of ending not afraid.

Ere Time and Place were, Time and Place were not,
When primitive Nothing Something straight begot,
Then all proceeded from the great united—What?

Something, the general attribute of all,
Severed from thee, its sole original,
Into thy boundless self must undistinguish'd fall.

Yet something did thy mighty power command,
And from thy fruitful emptiness's hand,
Snatch'd men, beasts, birds, fire, air, and land.

Matter, the wicked'st offspring of thy race,
By Form assisted, flew from thy embrace,
And rebel Light obscured thy reverend dusky face.

With Form and Matter, Time and Place did join;
Body, thy foe, with thee did leagues combine,
To spoil thy peaceful realm, and ruin all thy line.

But turn-coat Time assists the foe in vain,
And, bribed by thee, assists thy short-lived reign,
And to thy hungry womb drives back thy slaves again.

Though mysteries are barr'd from laic eyes,
And the divine alone, with warrant, pries
Into thy bosom, where the truth in private lies:

Yet this of thee the wise may freely say,
Thou from the virtuous nothing tak'st away,
And to be part with thee the wicked wisely pray.

Great Negative! how vainly would the wise
Inquire, define, distinguish, teach, devise?
Didst thou not stand to point their dull philosophies.

Is, or *is not*, the two great ends of Fate,
And, true or false, the subject of debate,
That perfect or destroy the vast designs of Fate;

When they have rack'd the politician's breast,
Within thy bosom most securely rest,
And, when reduced to thee, are least unsafe and best.

But Nothing, why does Something still permit
That sacred monarchs should at council sit
With persons highly thought at best for nothing fit?

Whilst weighty Something modestly abstains
From princes' coffers, and from statesmen's brains,
And nothing there like stately Nothing reigns.

Nothing, who dwell'st with fools in grave disguise,
For whom they reverend shapes and forms devise,
Lawn sleeves, and furs, and gowns, when they like thee look wise.

French truth, Dutch prowess, British policy,
Hibernian learning, Scotch civility,
Spaniards' dispatch, Danes' wit, are mainly seen in thee.

The great man's gratitude to his best friend,
Kings' promises, whores' vows, towards thee they bend,
Flow swiftly into thee, and in thee ever end.

LOVE AND LIFE: A SONG.

All my past life is mine no more,
The flying hours are gone:
Like transitory dreams given o'er,
Whose images are kept in store
By memory alone.

The time that is to come is not;
How can it then be mine?
The present moment 's all my lot;
And that, as fast as it is got,
Phillis, is only thine.

Then talk not of inconstancy,
False hearts, and broken vows;
If I, by miracle, can be
This live-long minute true to thee,
'Tis all that heaven allows.

This upright, uncompromising patriot, and honoured friend of Milton, was born at Hull, in 1620. At the age of fifteen, young Marvell, while pursuing his studies at Cambridge, was allured from the College by the Jesuits, who marked his promising talents, and wished to secure him as a proselyte. His father, however, followed him to London, rescued him from their machinations, and sent him back to the University. Having lost this careful parent in 1640, through a melancholy accident, Marvell was adopted by a wealthy lady, by whose kindness he was enabled to perfect his education, and make a tour through a large part of Europe; in the course of which he resided for some time at Constantinople, as Secretary to the English embassy. In 1653, he was employed by Cromwell, first as guardian to a Mr. Dutton, and afterwards as Assistant Latin Secretary to Milton, a year and a half before the death of the latter. Marvell, in 1660, and as long as he lived, sat in Parliament as the representative of his native town of Hull. His zealous attendance upon his duties in the House of Commons was so constant and unwearied, as to excite the admiration of all parties, while his disinterestedness and indifference to wealth, in an age of venality, and while his means were extremely limited, would have ranked him among the noblest characters of ancient Greece or Rome. He died in 1678. He left few poetical pieces; but they are valuable as the spontaneous outpourings of a pure, warm, affectionate heart, refined by extensive learning and a good natural taste.

THE NYMPH COMPLAINING FOR THE DEATH OF HER FAWN.

The wanton troopers riding by
Have shot my fawn, and it will die.
Ungentle men! they cannot thrive
Who kill'd thee. Thou ne'er didst alive
Them any harm; alas! nor could
Thy death to them do any good.
I'm sure I never wish'd them ill;
Nor do I for all this; nor will:
But, if my simple prayers may yet
Prevail with heaven to forget
Thy murder, I will join my tears,
Rather than fail. But, O my fears!
It cannot die so. Heaven's king
Keeps register of every thing,
And nothing may we use in vain;
Ev'n beasts must be with justice slain.

* * * *

Inconstant Sylvio, when yet
I had not found him counterfeit,

One morning (I remember well),
Tied in this silver chain and bell,
Gave it to me: nay, and I know
What he said then: I'm sure I do.
Said he, "Look how your huntsman here
Hath taught a Fawn to hunt his Deer."
But Sylvio soon had me beguiled:
This waxed tame while he grew wild,
And, quite regardless of my smart,
Left me his Fawn, but took his heart.
Thenceforth I set myself to play
My solitary time away
With this, and very well content
Could so my idle life have spent;
For it was full of sport, and light
Of foot, and heart; and did invite
Me to its game; it seem'd to bless
Itself in me. How could I less
Than love it? Oh, I cannot be
Unkind t' a beast that loveth me.
Had it lived long, I do not know
Whether it too might have done so
As Sylvio did; his gifts might be
Perhaps as false, or more, than he.
But I am sure, for aught that I
Could in so short a time espy,
Thy love was far more better than
The love of false and cruel man.
With sweetest milk and sugar first
I it at my own fingers nursed;
And as it grew, so every day
It wax'd more white and sweet than they:
It had so sweet a breath. And oft
I blush'd to see its foot more soft
And white, shall I say than my hand?
Nay, any lady's of the land.
It is a wondrous thing how fleet
'Twas on those little silver feet;
With what a pretty skipping grace
It oft would challenge me the race;
And when 't had left me far away,
'Twould stay, and run again, and stay;
For it was nimbler much than hinds,
And trod as if on the four winds.
I have a garden of my own,
But so with roses overgrown,

And lilies, that you would it guess
To be a little wilderness,
And all the spring time of the year
It only loved to be there.
Among the beds of lilies I
Have sought it oft where it should lie,
Yet could not, till itself would rise,
Find it, although before mine eyes;
For in the flaxen lilies' shade
It like a bank of lilies laid;
Upon the roses it would feed
Until its lips e'en seem'd to bleed;
And then to me 'twould boldly trip,
And print those roses on my lip.
But all its chief delight was still
On roses thus itself to fill,
And its pure virgin limbs to fold
In whitest sheets of lilies cold.
Had it lived long, it would have been
Lilies without, roses within.

* * * *



The celebrated author of Hudibras was born at Strensham in Worcestershire, in 1612. It cannot be ascertained whether he enjoyed a University education or not; but it is evident that his scholarship, however acquired, was both various and profound. It was fortunate, also, that the services in which he was successively employed were favourable for the development of his love of study, the first of these being the employment of clerk to Mr. Jefferys, an eminent magistrate in Worcestershire, where he enjoyed ample leisure for reading and meditation; and the second, an office in the household of the Countess of Kent, where he had the use of an ample library, and the society of the learned Selden, the friend and instructor of poets. We next find him in the employ of Sir Samuel Luke, one of Cromwell's officers, where he had abundant opportunities of studying the manners of the Puritans; and here, it is supposed, he conceived the first idea of his satirical epic of Hudibras, and collected the principal materials.

On the accession of Charles II. at the Restoration, Butler hoped that the loyalty he had evinced in evil times would not pass unremembered; but on this occasion he found, like many others who had still stronger claims upon royal gratitude, that Charles had extended the Act of Oblivion to friends as well as foes. Although, on the publication of the first part of Hudibras in 1663, the work became the delight of the court, and was frequently quoted by the king the poet reaped nothing but this empty applause, as the reward of his genius and labours. In the following year the second part was published, but with the same results. We are also told, that Butler had been taught to expect much from the patronage of the Duke of Buckingham, who engaged to recommend the poet to his majesty; but as that volatile nobleman was as heartless and thoughtless as his royal master, the promise was never fulfilled. Butler, however, still continued to write amidst obscurity and discouragement, and in 1678 the third part of Hudibras appeared. The elasticity of spirit, however, which had hitherto lent such a charm to the work, had been greatly impaired from the above-mentioned causes, so that this part is considerably inferior to the other two. Butler's death followed in 1680, when he was buried at the sole expense of a friend, in the churchyard of Govent Garden, after a place of interment in Westminster Abbey had been refused.

The poem of Hudibras was evidently suggested by the adventures of Don Quixotte. Cervantes, in sending his hero upon a chivalrous crusade to right wrongs, redress grievances, and make all mankind confess that Dulcinea del Tobosa was the peerless beauty of the world, intended to portray Charles V. and his wars to right the church, and bring all sects and opinions to one way of thinking. Charles, baffled in his attempt, retired to a cell, and there discovered how hopeless it was to force the whole world to think and act alike; and accordingly the knight of La Mancha, after being cudgelled and duped, retires to his peaceful home, becomes a sober-thinking man, and discovers that chivalry is a delusion. In the same manner, Butler intended to display the career of Puritanism during the period of the civil wars, its abhorrence of all amusements, its gloom, hypocrisy, and duplicity; and for this purpose he impersonated it in Sir Hudibras, who went forth "a colonelling" against bear-baiting, and every popular sport, and ended by being a cheat and a dupe. He has accoutred the hero with every requisite, and thrust him into every adventure, by which such a picture could be illustrated, while the singularity of figures, language, measure, and rhyme, in which the narrative is embodied, adds poignancy to the original conception. Like Cervantes, also, Butler has brought to the task an amount of learning, and a depth of observation, that indicate the labour and thought of years, rather than the easy and spontaneous overflow of an author writing merely to amuse. We must add, however, that the Puritan of Butler is an aggravated caricature, rather than a faithful portrait; and that, like too many wits, who endeavour to apply the test of ridicule to religious errors, he has frequently confounded a conscientious preciseness with affectation, and religious fervour with hypocrisy.

*



Arbould. Heat.

BUTLER.

DESCRIPTION OF HUDIBRAS.

When civil dudgeon first grew high,
And men fell out they knew not why;
When hard words, jealousies, and fears,
Set folks together by the ears,
And made them fight, like mad or drunk,
For Dame Religion, as for punk;
Whose honesty they all durst swear for,
Though not a man of them knew wherefore;
When Gospel-trumpeter, surrounded
With long-ear'd rout, to battle sounded;
And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
Was beat with fist instead of a stick;
Then did Sir Knight abandon dwelling,
And out he rode a colonelling.

A wight he was, whose very sight would
Entitle him Mirror of Knighthood,
That never bow'd his stubborn knee
To any thing but Chivalry,
Nor put up blow, but that which laid
Right Worshipful on shoulder-blade;
Chief of domestic knights and errant,
Either for chartel or for warrant;
Great on the bench, great in the saddle,
That could as well bind o'er as swaddle;
Mighty he was at both of these,
And styled of War, as well as Peace:
(So some rats, of amphibious nature,
Are either for the land or water:)
But here our authors make a doubt
Whether he were more wise or stout:
Some hold the one, and some the other,
But, howsoe'er they make a pother,
The difference was so small, his brain
Outweigh'd his rage but half a grain;
Which made some take him for a tool
That knaves do work with, call'd a Fool.
For 't has been held by many, that
As Montaigne, playing with his cat,
Complains she thought him but an ass,
Much more she would Sir Hudibras
(For that 's the name our valiant Knight
To all his challenges did write):
But they 're mistaken very much;
'Tis plain enough he was no such.
We grant, although he had much wit,
H' was very shy of using it,
As being loth to wear it out,
And therefore bore it not about;
Unless on holy-days, or so,
As men their best apparel do.
Beside 'tis known he could speak Greek
As naturally as pigs squeak;
That Latin was no more difficile,
Than to a blackbird 'tis to whistle:
Being rich in both, he never scanted
His bounty unto such as wanted;
But much of either would afford
To many that had not one word.
For Hebrew roots, although they 're found
To flourish most in barren ground,

*

He had such plenty, as sufficed
To make some think him circumcised.

For his religion, it was fit
To match his learning and his wit:
'Twas Presbyterian true blue;
For he was of that stubborn crew
Of errant saints, whom all men grant
To be the true Church Militant;
Such as do build their faith upon
The holy text of pike and gun;
Decide all controversies by
Infallible artillery;
And prove their doctrine orthodox
By apostolic blows and knocks;
Call fire, and sword, and desolation,
A godly, thorough Reformation,
Which always must be carried on,
And still be doing, never done;
As if Religion were intended
For nothing else but to be mended:
A sect whose chief devotion lies
In odd perverse antipathies;
In falling out with that or this,
And finding somewhat still amiss;
More peevish, cross, and splenetic,
Than dog distract, or monkey sick;
That with more care keep holy-day
The wrong, than others the right way;
Compound for sins they are inclined to,
By damning those they have no mind to:
Still so perverse and opposite,
As if they worshipp'd God for spite:
The self-same thing they will abhor
One way, and long another for:
Free-will they one way disavow,
Another, nothing else allow:
All piety consists therein
In them, in other men all sin:
Rather than fail, they will defy
That which they love most tenderly;
Quarrel with minced pies, and disparage
Their best and dearest friend, plum-porridge;
Fat pig and goose itself oppose,
And blaspheme custard through the nose.

Thus was he gifted and accoutred,
We mean on th' inside, not the outward:
That next of all we shall discuss;
Then listen, Sirs, it follows thus.
His tawny beard was th' equal grace
Both of his wisdom and his face;
In cut and dye so like a tile,
A sudden view it would beguile;
The upper part whereof was whey,
The nether orange, mix'd with grey.

* * * *

His back, or rather burthen, show'd
As if it stoop'd with its own load:
For as Æneas bore his sire
Upon his shoulders through the fire,
Our Knight did bear no less a pack
Of his own buttocks on his back;
Which now had almost got the upper-
Hand of his head for want of crupper:
To poise this equally, he bore
A paunch of the same bulk before,
Which still he had a special care
To keep well cramm'd with thrifty fare;
As white-pot, butter-milk, and curds,
Such as a country house affords;
With other victual, which anon
We farther shall dilate upon,
When of his hose we come to treat,
The cupboard where he kept his meat.
His doublet was of sturdy buff,
And though not sword, yet cudgel-proof,
Whereby 'twas fitter for his use,
Who fear'd no blows but such as bruise.
His breeches were of rugged woollen,
And had been at the siege of Bullen;
To old King Harry so well known,
Some writers held they were his own:
Through they were lined with many a piece
Of ammunition bread and cheese,
And fat black puddings, proper food
For warriors that delight in blood:
For, as we said, he always chose
To carry vittle in his hose,
That often tempted rats and mice
The ammunition to surprise;

And when he put a hand but in
The one or t' other magazine,
They stoutly in defence on 't stood,
And from the wounded foe drew blood,
And till th' were storm'd and beaten out,
Ne'er left the fortified redoubt:
And though knights-errant, as some think,
Of old did neither eat nor drink,
Because when thorough deserts vast,
And regions desolate, they past,
Where belly-timber above ground,
Or under, was not to be found,
Unless they grazed, there 's not one word
Of their provision on record;
Which made some confidently write,
They had no stomachs but to fight:
'Tis false; for Arthur wore in hall
Round table like a farthingal,
On which, with shirt pull'd out behind,
And eke before, his good knights dined;
Though 'twas no table some suppose,
But a huge pair of round trunk hose,
In which he carried as much meat
As he and all the knights could eat,
When laying by their swords and truncheons,
They took their breakfasts or their nuncheons.
But let that pass at present, lest
We should forget where we digrest,
As learned authors use, to whom
We leave it, and to th' purpose come.
His puissant sword unto his side,
Near his undaunted heart, was tied,
With basket-hilt that would hold broth,
And serve for fight and dinner both;
In it he melted lead for bullets
To shoot at foes, and sometimes pullets,
To whom he bore so fell a grutch,
He ne'er gave quarter to any such.
The trenchant blade, Toledo trusty,
For want of fighting was grown rusty,
And ate into itself, for lack
Of somebody to hew and hack:
The peaceful scabbard, where it dwelt,
The rancour of its edge had felt;
For of the lower end two handful
It had devoured, 'twas so manful,

And so much scorn'd to lurk in case,
As if it durst not show its face.
In many desperate attempts
Of warrants, exigents, contempts,
It had appear'd with courage bolder
Than Serjéant Bum invading shoulder:
Oft had it ta'en possession,
And prisoners too, or made them run.
This sword a dagger had, his page,
That was but little for his age,
And therefore waited on him so,
As dwarfs upon knights-errant do:
It was a serviceable dudgeon,
Either for fighting or for drudging:
When it had stabb'd, or broke a head,
It would scrape trenchers, or chip bread;
Toast cheese or bacon; though it were
To bait a mouse-trap, 'twould not care:
'Twould make clean shoes, and in the earth
Set leeks and onions, and so forth:
It had been 'prentice to a brewer,
Where this and more it did endure,
But left the trade, as many more
Have lately done on the same score.
In th' holsters, at his saddle-bow,
Two aged pistols he did stow,
Among the surplus of such meat
As in his hose he could not get:
These would inveigle rats with th' scent,
To forage when the cocks were bent,
And sometimes catch them with a snap,
As cleverly as th' ablest trap:
They were upon hard duty still,
And every night stood sentinel,
To guard the magazine i' th' hose
From two-legg'd and from four-legg'd foes.

FORTUNE OF HUDIBRAS IN BATTLE.

For Colon, chusing out a stone,
Levell'd so right, it thump'd upon
His manly paunch with such a force,
As almost beat him off his horse.

He loosed his whinyard, and the rein,
But laying fast hold on the mane,
Preserved his seat: and as a goose
In death contracts his talons close,
So did the Knight, and with one claw,
The tricker of his pistol draw.
The gun went off; and as it was
Still fatal to stout Hudibras,
In all his feats of arms, when least
He dreamt of it to prosper best,
So now he fared: the shot, let fly
At random 'mong the enemy,
Pierced Talgol's gabardine, and grazing
Upon his shoulder, in the passing
Lodged in Magnano's brass habergeon,
Who straight, A surgeon cried, a surgeon:
He tumbled down, and as he fell,
Did Murther, Murther, Murther, yell.

COMBAT BETWEEN TRULLA AND HUDIBRAS.

This said, he jogg'd his good steed nigher,
And steer'd him gently towards the Squire,
Then bowing down his body, stretch'd
His hand out, and at Ralpho reach'd;
When Trulla, whom he did not mind,
Charged him like lightening behind.
She had been long in search about
Magnano's wound, to find it out,
But could find none, nor where the shot
That had so startled him was got:
But, having found the worst was past,
She fell to her own work at last,
The pillage of the prisoners,
Which in all feats of arms was her's;
And now to plunder Ralph she flew,
When Hudibras's hard fate drew
To succour him; for as he bow'd
To help him up, she laid a load
Of blows so heavy, and placed so well,
On th' other side, that down he fell.
Yield, scoundrel base (quoth she), or die;
Thy life is mine, and liberty;
But if thou think'st I took thee tardy,
And dar'st presume to be so hardy

To try thy fortune o'er afresh,
I'll wave my title to thy flesh,
Thy arms and baggage, now my right,
And, if thou hast the heart to try 't,
I'll lend thee back thyself a while,
And once more, for that carcase vile,
Fight upon tick.—Quoth Hudibras,
Thou offer'st nobly, valiant lass,
And I shall take thee at thy word.
First let me rise and take my sword;
That sword which has so oft this day
Through squadrons of my foes made way,
And some to other worlds dispatcht,
Now with a feeble spinster matcht,
Will blush, with blood ignoble stain'd,
By which no honour 's to be gain'd:
But if thou'lt take m' advice in this,
Consider, whilst thou may'st, what 'tis
To interrupt a victor's course,
B' opposing such a trivial force:
For if with conquest I come off
(And that I shall do sure enough),
Quarter thou canst not have, nor grace,
By law of arms, in such a case;
Both which I now do offer freely.
I scorn (quoth she), thou coxcomb silly,
Quarter or counsel from a foe;
If thou canst force me to it, do:
But lest it should again be said,
When I have once more won thy head,
I took thee napping, unprepared,
Arm, and betake thee to thy guard.
This said, she to her tackle fell,
And on the Knight let fall a peal
Of blows so fierce, and press'd so home,
That he retired, and follow'd 's bum.
Stand to 't (quoth she), or yield to mercy;
It is not fighting *arsie-versie*
Shall serve thy turn.—This stirr'd his spleen
More than the danger he was in,
The blows he felt, or was to feel,
Although th' already made him reel;
Honour, despite, revenge, and shame,
At once into his stomach came;
Which fired it so, he raised his arm
Above his head, and rain'd a storm
Of blows so terrible and thick,

As if he meant to hash her quick:
But she upon her truncheon took them,
And by oblique diversion broke them,
Waiting an opportunity
To pay all back with usury,
Which long she fail'd not of; for now
The Knight with one dead-doing blow
Resolving to decide the fight,
And she with quick and cunning sleight
Avoiding it, the force and weight
He charged upon it was so great,
As almost sway'd him to the ground:
No sooner she th' advantage found,
But in she flew; and seconding,
With home-made thrust, the heavy swing,
She laid him flat upon his side,
And, mounting on his trunk astride,
Quoth she, I told thee what would come
Of all thy vapouring, base scum:
Say, will the law of arms allow
I may have grace and quarter now?
Or wilt thou rather break thy word,
And stain thine honour, than thy sword?
A man of war to damn his soul,
In basely breaking his parole;
And when before the fight, th' had'st vow'd
To give no quarter in cold blood;
Now thou hast got me for a Tartar,
To make me against my will take quarter,
Why dost not put me to the sword,
But cowardly fly from thy word?
Quoth Hudibras, The day's thine own;
Thou and thy stars have cast me down:
My laurels are transplanted now,
And flourish on thy conquering brow:
My loss of honour 's great enough,
Thou need'st not brand it with a scoff:
Sarcasms may eclipse thine own,
But cannot blur my lost renown:
I am not now in Fortune's power,
He that is down can fall no lower.
The ancient heroes were illustrious
For being benign, and not blustrous
Against a vanquish'd foe: their swords
Were sharp and trenchant, not their words;
And did in fight but cut work out
T' employ their courtesies about.

*

Quoth she, Although thou hast deserved,
Base Slubberdegullion, to be served
As thou didst vow to deal with me,
If thou hadst got the victory;
Yet I shall rather act a part
That suits my fame, than thy desert.
Thy arms, thy liberty, beside
All that 's on th' outside of thy hide,
Are mine by military law,
Of which I will not bate one straw;
The rest, thy life and limbs, once more,
Though doubly forfeit, I restore.

* * * *

This said, the Knight did straight submit
And laid his weapons at her feet.
Next he disrobed his gabardine,
And with it did himself resign.
She took it, and forthwith divesting
The mantle that she wore, said, jesting,
Take that, and wear it for my sake;
Then threw it o'er his sturdy back.



WENTWORTH DILLON, Earl of Roscommon, was born in Ireland about the year 1633, during the lieutenancy of the Earl of Strafford, his maternal uncle, in that kingdom; and by whom he was sent to Yorkshire at an early period, when the Irish disorders menaced the safety of the Protestant nobles and their families. When Strafford himself was about to be impeached, Dillon was sent to Caen, being then only nine years old. After studying there for some years, and perfecting himself in classical attainments, the troubled state of England deterred him from returning, and Roscommon travelled into Italy, where he gratified his love of antiquity by collecting valuable ancient relics, and especially medals, in which he was a distinguished connoisseur. On the Restoration, he returned to England, threw himself headlong into the frivolities and vices of the times, and impoverished himself by gaming and other excesses. He afterwards married, and devoted himself more closely to literature, until his death, which took place in 1684. The poems of this Earl are few, but his verses are distinguished by their polish, and, what is more, by their morality—a rare quality for the age in which he lived.

"In all Charles' days
Roscommon only boasts unspotted lays."—POPE.

COMPARISON BETWEEN FRENCH AND ENGLISH TRANSLATORS OF POETRY.

When France had breathed after intestine broils,
And peace and conquest crown'd her foreign toils,
There (cultivated by a royal hand)
Learning grew fast, and spread, and blest the land;
The choicest books that Rome or Greece have known,
Her excellent translators made her own:
And Europe still considerably gains,
Both by their good example and their pains.
From hence our generous emulation came,
We undertook, and we perform'd the same.
But now, we show the world a nobler way,
And in translated verse do more than they;
Serene and clear, harmonious Horace flows,
With sweetness not to be exprest in prose:
Degrading prose explains his meaning ill,
And shows the stuff, but not the workman's skill:
I (who have served him more than twenty years)
Scarce know my master as he there appears.
Vain are our neighbours' hopes, and vain their cares,
The fault is more their language's than theirs:
'Tis courtly, florid, and abounds in words
Of softer sound than ours perhaps affords;
But who did ever in French authors see
The comprehensive English energy?
The weighty bullion of one sterling line,
Drawn to French wire, would through whole pages shine.
I speak my private, but impartial sense,
With freedom, and (I hope) without offence;

For I 'll recant, when France can show me wit
As strong as ours, and as succinctly writ.

From An Essay on Translated Verse.

ODE UPON SOLITUDE.

Hail, sacred Solitude! from this calm bay,
I view the world's tempestuous sea,
And with wise pride despise
All those senseless vanities:
With pity moved for others, cast away
On rocks of hopes and fears, I see them toss'd
On rocks of folly, and of vice, I see them lost
Some the prevailing malice of the great,
Unhappy men or adverse Fate,
Sunk deep into the gulphs of an afflicted state.
But more, far more, a numberless prodigious train,
Whilst Virtue courts them, but alas in vain,
Fly from her kind embracing arms,
Deaf to her fondest call, blind to her greatest charms;
And, sunk in pleasures and in brutish ease,
They in their shipwreck'd state themselves obdurate please

Hail, sacred solitude! soul of my soul,
It is by thee I truly live,
Thou dost a better life and nobler vigour give;
Dost each unruly appetite control:
Thy constant quiet fills my peaceful breast
With unmix'd joy, uninterrupted rest.
Presuming love does ne'er invade
This private solitary shade:
And, with fantastic wounds by beauty made,
The joy has no allay of jealousy, hope, and fear,
The solid comforts of this happy sphere:
Yet I exalted Love admire,
Friendship, abhorring sordid gain,
And purified from Lust's dishonest stain:
Nor is it for my solitude unfit,
For I am with my friend alone,
As if we were but one;
'Tis the polluted love that multiplies,

But friendship does two souls in one comprise.
Here in a full and constant tide doth flow
All blessings man can hope to know;
Here in a deep recess of thought we find
Pleasures which entertain, and which exalt the mind;

Pleasures which do from friendship and from knowledge
rise,
Which make us happy, as they make us wise:
Here may I always on this downy grass,
Unknown, unseen, my easy minutes pass:
Till with a gentle force victorious death
My solitude invade,
And, stopping for a while my breath,
With ease convey me to a better shade.

THE CONFIDENT QUACK.

A quack (too scandalously mean to name)
Had, by man-midwifery, got wealth and fame:
As if Lucina had forgot her trade,
The labouring wife invokes his surer aid.
Well-season'd bowls the gossip's spirits raise,
Who, while she guzzles, chats the doctor's praise;
And largely, what she wants in words, supplies,
With maudlin-eloquence of trickling eyes.
But what a thoughtless animal is man!
(How very active in his own trepan!)
For, greedy of physicians' frequent fees,
From female mellow praise he takes degrees:
Struts in a new unlicensed gown, and then
From saving women falls to killing men.
Another such had left the nation thin,
In spite of all the children he brought in.
His pills as thick as hand-granadoes flew;
And where they fell, as certainly they slew;
His name struck every where as great a damp,
As Archimedes through the Roman camp.
With this, the doctor's pride began to cool;
For smarting soundly may convince a fool.
But now repentance came too late for grace:
And meagre Famine stared him in the face:
Fain would he to the wives be reconciled,
But found no husband left to own a child.
The friends, that got the brats, were poison'd too;
In this sad case, what could our vermin do?
Worried with debts and past all hope of bail,
Th' unpitied wretch lies rotting in a jail:
And there with basket-alms, scarce kept alive,
Shows how mistaken talents ought to thrive.

From An Essay on Translated Verse.

CHARLES COTTON was born in 1630. After studying at Cambridge, and travelling abroad, he married at his return to England the daughter of Sir Thomas Owthorp. As, however, he inherited a heavily encumbered estate, and possessed extravagant habits, he was obliged to embrace the military profession as a means of subsistence; and he went as a captain to Ireland, where he married his second wife, Mary, Countess Dowager of Ardglass. Cotton still continued to indulge his reckless habits of expense, and died insolvent at Westminster, in 1687. Of his poetry, his chief production is, A Voyage to Ireland, in burlesque, in which there is considerable comic humour, delivered in an unconstrained and lively manner. He also wrote a disgusting burlesque translation of part of the Æneid.

A HOST AND HOSTESS.

"A hay!" quoth the foremost, "ho! who keeps the house?"
Which said, out an host comes as brisk as a louse:
His hair comb'd as sleek as a barber he 'd been,
A cravat with black ribbon tied under his chin;
Though by what I saw in him, I straight 'gan to fear
That knot would be one day slipp'd under his ear.
Quoth he (with low congé), "What lack you, my lord?"
"The best liquor," quoth I, "that the house will afford."
"You shall straight," quoth he; and then calls out, "Mary,
Come quickly, and bring us a quart of Canary."
"Hold, hold, my spruce host! for i' th' morning so early,
I never drink liquor but what 's made of barley."
Which words were scarce out, but, which made me admire,
My lordship was presently turn'd into 'squire:
"Ale, 'squire, you mean?" quoth he nimbly again,
"What, must it be purl'd?"—"No, I love it best plain."
"Why, if you 'll drink ale, sir, pray take my advice,
Here 's the best ale i' th' land, if you 'll go to the price;
Better, I sure am, ne'er blew out a stopple;
But then, in plain truth, it is sixpence a bottle."
"Why faith," quoth I, "friend, if your liquor be such,
For the best ale in England, it is not too much:
Let 's have it, and quickly."—"O sir! you may stay;
A pot in your pate is a mile in your way:
Come, bring out a bottle here presently, wife,
Of the best Cheshire hum he e'er drank in his life."
Straight out comes the mistress in waistcoat of silk,
As clear as a milkmaid, as white as her milk,
With visage as oval and sleek as an egg,
As straight as an arrow, as right as my leg:
A curtsey she made, as demure as a sister,
I could not forbear, but alighted and kiss'd her:

Then ducking another with most modest mien,
The first word she said, was, "Will 't please you walk in?"
I thank'd her; but told her, I then could not stay,
For the haste of my bus'ness did call me away.
She said, she was sorry it fell out so odd,
But if, when again I should travel that road,
I would stay there a night, she assured me the nation
Should no where afford better accommodation.

From A Voyage to Ireland: Canto I.

COTTON'S ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF.

Supper being ended, and things away taken,
Master mayor's curiosity 'gan to awaken;
Wherefore making me draw something nearer his chair,
He will'd and required me there to declare
My country, my birth, my estate, and my parts,
And whether I was not a master of arts;
And eke what the bus'ness was had brought me thither,
With what I was going about now, and whither:
Giving me caution, no lie should escape me,
For if I should trip, he should certainly trap me.
I answer'd, my country was famed Staffordshire;
That in deeds, bills, and bonds, I was ever writ squire;
That of land I had both sorts, some good, and some evil,
But that a great part on 't was pawn'd to the Devil;
That as for my parts, they were such as he saw;
That, indeed, I had a small smatt'ring of law,
Which I lately had got more by practice than reading
By sitting o' th' bench, whilst others were pleading;
But that arms I had ever more studied than arts,
And was now to a captain raised by my deserts;
That the business which led me through Palatine ground
Into Ireland was, whither now I was bound;
Where his worship's great favour I loud will proclaim,
And in all other places wherever I came.
He said, as to that, I might do what I list,
But that I was welcome, and gave me his fist;
When having my fingers made crack with his gripes,
He call'd to his man for some bottles and pipes.

From A Voyage to Ireland: Canto II.

CHARLES SACKVILLE, Earl of Dorset, was born January 24th, 1637. He was educated under a private tutor, and afterwards he travelled into Italy, from which he returned a little before the Restoration. He soon became a favourite of Charles II., and distinguished himself as a leader in the profligacy and excesses of the courtiers. In the naval war with the Dutch, he attended the Duke of York as a volunteer, in 1665, was present at the victory obtained on the 3d of June, and, as the report was generally current, composed the song, "To all you ladies now at land," on the evening preceding the engagement. After being employed in political business during the reigns of Charles II. and James II., Lord Dorset took a decided part in favour of the Revolution, and became a favourite with William, by whom he was appointed lord-chamberlain of the household. His lordship died January 19th, 1706. His poetry consists of only a few fugitive pieces.

TO MR. EDWARD HOWARD, ON HIS INCOMPARABLE, INCOMPREHENSIBLE POEM, CALLED THE BRITISH PRINCES.

Come on, ye Critics, find one fault who dares;
For read it backward, like a witch's prayers,
'Twill do as well; throw not away your jests
On solid nonsense that abides all tests.
Wit, like tierce-claret, when 't begins to pall,
Neglected lies, and 's of no use at all,
But, in its full perfection of decay,
Turns vinegar, and comes again in play.
Thou hast a brain, such as it is indeed;
On what else should thy worm of fancy feed?
Yet in a filbert I have often known
Maggots survive, when all the kernel 's gone.
This simile shall stand in thy defence,
'Gainst those dull rogues who now and then write sense.
Thy style 's the same, whatever be thy theme,
As some digestions turn all meat to phlegm:
They lie, dear Ned, who say thy brain is barren,
Where deep conceits, like maggots, breed in carrion.
Thy stumbling founder'd jade can trot as high
As any other Pegasus can fly:
So the dull eel moves nimbler in the mud,
Than all the swift-finn'd racers of the flood.
As skilful divers to the bottom fall
Sooner than those who cannot swim at all;
So in this way of writing, without thinking,
Thou hast a strange alacrity in sinking.
Thou writ'st below ev'n thy own natural parts,
And with acquired dulness and new arts
Of studied nonsense, tak'st kind readers' hearts.

Therefore, dear Ned, at my advice, forbear
Such loud complaints 'gainst critics to prefer,
Since thou art turn'd an arrant libeller;
Thou sett'st thy name to what thyself dost write;
Did ever libel yet so sharply bite?

SONG.

Corydon beneath a willow,
By a murmuring current laid,
His arm reclined, the lover's pillow,
Thus address'd the charming maid.

O! my Sacharissa, tell
How could Nature take delight
That a heart so hard should dwell
In a frame so soft and white.

Could you feel but half the anguish,
Half the tortures, that I bear,
How for you I daily languish,
You 'd be kind as you are fair.

See the fire that in me reigns,
O! behold a burning man;
Think I feel my dying pains,
And be cruel if you can.

With her conquest pleased, the dame
Cried, with an insulting look,
Yes, I fain would quench your flame;
She spoke, and pointed to the brook.

SONG:

WRITTEN AT SEA, IN THE FIRST DUTCH WAR, 1665, THE NIGHT BEFORE AN ENGAGEMENT.

To all you ladies now at land,
We men, at sea, indite;
But first would have you understand,
How hard it is to write;
The Muses now, and Neptune too,
We must implore to write to you.
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

For though the Muses should prove kind,
And fill our empty brain;
Yet if rough Neptune rouse the wind,
To wave the azure main,
Our paper, pen, and ink, and we,
Roll up and down our ships at sea.
With a fa, &c.

Then if we write not by each post,
Think not we are unkind;
Nor yet conclude our ships are lost,
By Dutchmen, or by wind:
Our tears we'll send a speedier way,
The tide shall bring them twice a-day.
With a fa, &c.

The king, with wonder and surprise,
Will swear the seas grow bold;
Because the tides will higher rise,
Than e'er they used of old:
But let him know, it is our tears
Bring floods of grief to Whitehall stairs.
With a fa, &c.

Should foggy Opdam chance to know
Our sad and dismal story;
The Dutch would scorn so weak a foe,
And quit their fort at Goree:
For what resistance can they find
From men who 've left their hearts behind!
With a fa, &c.

Let wind and weather do its worst,
Be you to us but kind;
Let Dutchmen vapour, Spaniards curse,
No sorrow we shall find:
'Tis then no matter how things go,
Or who 's our friend, or who 's our foe.
With a fa, &c.

To pass our tedious hours away,
We throw a merry main;
Or else at serious ombre play;
But, why should we in vain
Each other's ruin thus pursue?
We were undone when we left you.
With a fa, &c.

But now our fears tempestuous grow,
And cast our hopes away;
Whilst you, regardless of our woe,
Sit careless at a play:
Perhaps, permit some happier man
To kiss your hand, or flirt your fan.
With a fa, &c.

When any mournful tune you hear,
That dies in every note;
As if it sigh'd with each man's care,
For being so remote;
Think how often love we 've made
To you, when all those tunes were play'd.
With a fa, &c.

In justice you cannot refuse,
To think of our distress;
When we for hopes of honour lose
Our certain happiness;
All those designs are but to prove
Ourselves more worthy of your love.
With a fa, &c.

And now we 've told you all our loves,
And likewise all our fears;
In hopes this declaration moves
Some pity from your tears;
Let 's hear of no inconstancy,
We have too much of that at sea.
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

SONG.

Dorinda's sparkling wit and eyes,
United, cast too fierce a light,
Which blazes high, but quickly dies,
Pains not the heart, but hurts the sight.

Love is a calmer, gentler joy,
Smooth are his looks, and soft his pace;
Her Cupid is a black-guard boy,
That runs his link full in your face.

This great poet, who ranks next to Milton and Shakspeare, was born at Aldwinkle, near Oundle, on the 9th of August, 1631. He was first educated in Westminster School, and afterwards in Trinity College, Cambridge. He must have commenced the writing of poetry at an early period, as his poem, On the Death of Lord Hastings, was published in 1649, when he was not more than eighteen years old. After the death of Cromwell, in 1658, when his mind had been matured by study, he stepped forth to public notice by his Heroic Stanzas on the late Lord Protector, a subject which, from its intrinsic greatness, seems to have wrung mournful lyrics even from those who were the first to hymn the arrival of Charles II. Dryden, upon this occasion, was as eager as the rest to welcome the new sovereign, which he did in his Astræa Redux. It would appear, however, that, like his tuneful brethren, after having sown the wind of panegyric, he was fated to reap the whirlwind of disappointment; for he was obliged to betake himself to a less congenial, although a more profitable, department of poetry, and write for the stage, which he continued to do for many years. At intervals he continued to produce several poems, which raised his reputation above all his contemporaries, and in 1668 he succeeded Davenant as Poet Laureate.

Dryden, however, was not allowed to enjoy his high reputation undisturbed. Envy was excited, and satire and slander were alternately circulated against him. Among his most distinguished enemies were the Duke of Buckingham and the Earl of Rochester, of whom the former ridiculed the poet in his well-known farce, The Rehearsal; while the latter took Settle, the antagonist of Dryden, under his protection. But these, although studied insults, and calculated to wound deeply, were not the worst. The Duke of Buckingham having written an anonymous satire, reflecting upon the Duchess of Portsmouth, Dryden was suspected of being the author, in consequence of which he was way-laid and severely beaten. To these evils were superadded the hardships of poverty, and, during a period in which he was refining our language in verses that constitute some of the noblest of our national literary treasures, Dryden was struggling for subsistence, and obliged to depend upon the stinted allowances of his booksellers. Like Milton, too, he entertained the noble enthusiasm of writing some epic that should redound to the glory of his country, and had fixed upon Prince Arthur for his theme: but Charles and his frivolous courtiers were too deeply immersed in sensuality to extend the necessary patronage for such a purpose, and an opportunity, which the wealth of England cannot purchase back, was lost, for want of one of those salaries which were so liberally dealt out to pimps and parasites.

In 1681, Dryden inflicted a tremendous revenge upon his personal enemies, by the publication of Absalom and Achitophel; perhaps the most vigorous, as it was also the most popular, of all his writings. The victims writhed, the nation at large read, admired, and applauded; and every reply only showed the hopelessness of encountering such a formidable antagonist.

After the accession of James, and when Popery became the chief qualification for court favour, Dryden renounced Protestantism, and became a Papist. This change happened at a suspicious season, so that the honesty of his conversion was called in question: but that he was sincere in his new creed was sufficiently attested, by his educating his sons in the doctrines and worship of the church of Rome. He now endeavoured to wield his pen in defence of the Romish faith, and his chief attempt, in this new warfare, was, The Hind and the Panther. But notwithstanding its splendid descriptions and vigorous sentiments, the plan of the work was too startling; and the idea of two beasts discussing arguments in theology, and quoting the Fathers, excited disgust or merriment, so that, as a work of controversy, it proved a complete failure. If the poet had hoped to obtain profit or court favour by changing his faith, these hopes were completely blasted by the Revolution. He was deprived of the laurel, which was given to his enemy, Shadwell; and in his old days he was obliged to rely wholly upon his pen for subsistence. In this manner he laboured till his death, which occurred on the 1st of May, 1701.



H. Corbould. W. Finden.

DRYDEN.

FROM AN ODE TO THE MEMORY OF MRS. ANNE KILLIGREW.

When in mid-air the golden trump shall sound,
To raise the nations under ground;
When in the valley of Jehoshaphat,
The judging God shall close the book of fate;
And there the last assizes keep,
For those who wake, and those who sleep:
When rattling bones together fly,
From the four corners of the sky;
When sinews o'er the skeletons are spread,
Those clothed with flesh, and life inspires the dead;
The sacred poets first shall hear the sound,
And foremost from the tomb shall bound,
For they are cover'd with the lightest ground;
And straight, with inborn vigour, on the wing,
Like mountain larks, to the new morning sing.
There thou, sweet saint, before the quire shall go,
As harbinger of heaven, the way to show,
The way which thou so well hast learnt below.

TRUTH OF REVELATION.

Dar'st thou, poor worm, offend Infinity?
And must the terms of peace be given by thee?
Then thou art Justice in the last appeal;
Thy easy God instructs thee to rebel:
And, like a king remote and weak, must take
What satisfaction thou art pleased to make.
But if there be a power too just and strong,
To wink at crimes, and bear unpunish'd wrong;
Look humbly upward, see his will disclose
The forfeit first, and then the fine impose:
A mulct thy poverty could never pay,
Had not eternal wisdom found the way:
And with celestial wealth supplied thy store:
His justice makes the fine, his mercy quits the score.
See God descending in thy human frame;
Th' offended suffering in th' offender's name:
All thy misdeeds to him imputed see,
And all his righteousness devolved on thee.
For, granting we have sinn'd, and that th' offence
Of man is made against Omnipotence,
Some price that bears proportion must be paid,
And infinite with infinite be weighed.
See then the Deist lost: remorse for vice,
Not paid; or, paid, inadequate in price:
What farther means can reason now direct,
Or what relief from human wit expect?
That shows us sick; and sadly are we sure
Still to be sick, till heaven reveal the cure:
If then Heaven's will must needs be understood,
Which must, if we want cure, and Heaven be good,
Let all records of will reveal'd be shown;
With scripture all in equal balance thrown,
And our one sacred book will be that one.
Proof needs not here; for whether we compare
That impious, idle, superstitious ware
Of rites, lustrations, offerings, which before,
In various ages, various countries bore,
With Christian faith and virtues, we shall find
None answering the great ends of human kind
But this one rule of life, that shows us best
How God may be appeased, and mortals blest.
Whether from length of time its worth we draw,
The word is scarce more ancient than the law:

*

Heaven's early care prescribed for every age;
First, in the soul, and after, in the page.
Or, whether more abstractedly we look,
Or on the writers, or the written book,
Whence, but from heaven, could men unskill'd in arts,
In several ages born, in several parts,
Weave such agreeing truths? or how, or why,
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie;
Unask'd their pains, ungrateful their advice,
Starving their gain, and martyrdom their price?
If on the book itself we cast our view,
Concurrent heathens prove the story true:
The doctrine, miracles, which must convince,
For heaven in them appeals to human sense:
And though they prove not, they confirm the cause,
When what is taught agrees with Nature's laws.
Then for the style, majestic and divine,
It speaks no less than God in every line:
Commanding words; whose force is still the same
As the first fiat that produced our frame.
All faiths beside, or did by arms ascend;
Or sense indulged has made mankind their friend:
This only doctrine does our lusts oppose:
Unfed by Nature's soil, in which it grows;
Cross to our interests, curbing sense and sin;
Oppress'd without, and undermined within,
It thrives through pain; its own tormentors tires;
And with a stubborn patience still aspires.
To what can reason such effects assign,
Transcending Nature, but to laws divine;
Which in that sacred volume are contain'd,
Sufficient, clear, and for that use ordain'd?

From Religio Laici.

CHARACTER OF THE ENGLISH, UNDER THE SIMILITUDE OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE.

The Jews, a headstrong, moody, murmuring race,
As ever tried th' extent and stretch of grace;
God's pamper'd people, whom, debauch'd with ease,
No king could govern, nor no God could please;
Gods they had tried of every shape and size,
That godsmiths could produce, or priests devise:
These Adam-wits, too fortunately free,
Began to dream they wanted liberty;

And when no rule, no precedent, was found,
Of men, by laws less circumscribed and bound,
They led their wild desires to woods and caves,
And thought that all but savages were slaves.
They who, when Saul was dead, without a blow,
Made foolish Ishbosheth the crown forego;
Who banish'd David did from Hebron bring,
And with a general shout proclaim'd him king;
Those very Jews, who at their very best
Their humour more than loyalty exprest,
Now wonder'd why so long they had obey'd
An idle monarch, which their hands had made;
Thought they might ruin him they could create,
Or melt him to that golden calf, a state.
But these were random bolts: no form'd design,
Nor interest, made the factious crowd to join:
The sober part of Israel, free from stain,
Well knew the value of a peaceful reign;
And, looking backward with a wise affright,
Saw seams of wounds dishonest to the sight;
In contemplation of whose ugly scars,
They curst the memory of civil wars.
The moderate sort of men thus qualified,
Inclined the balance to the better side;
And David's mildness managed it so well,
The bad found no occasion to rebel.
But when to sin our biass'd nature leans,
The careful devil is still at hand with means;
And providently pimps for ill desires:
The good old cause revived a plot requires.
Plots true or false are necessary things,
To raise up commonwealths, and ruin kings.

From Absalom and Achitophel.

CHARACTER OF THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, UNDER THE NAME OF ACHITOPHEL.

Of these the false Achitophel was first;
A name to all succeeding ages curst:
For close designs, and crooked counsels fit;
Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit;
Restless, unfix'd in principles and place;
In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace:
A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy body to decay,
And o'erinform'd the tenement of clay.

A daring pilot in extremity;
Pleased with the danger when the waves went high,
He sought the storms; but, for a calm unfit,
Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit.
Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide;
Else why should he, with wealth and honour blest,
Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?
Punish a body which he could not please,
Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?
And all to leave what with his toil he won,
To that unfeather'd two-legg'd thing, a son;
Got, while his soul did huddled notions try;
And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy.
In friendship false, implacable in hate;
Resolved to ruin, or to rule the state;
To compass this the triple bond he broke;
The pillars of the public safety shook;
And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke:
Then, seized with fear, yet still affecting fame,
Usurp'd a patriot's all-atoning name.
So easy still it proves, in factious times,
With public zeal to cancel private crimes.
How safe is treason, and how sacred ill,
Where none can sin against the people's will!
Where crowds can wink, and no offence be known,
Since in another's guilt they find their own?
Yet fame deserved no enemy can grudge;
The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge.
In Israel's courts ne'er sat an Abethdin
With more discerning eyes, or hands more clean,
Unbribed, unsought, the wretched to redress;
Swift of dispatch, and easy of access.
Oh! had he been content to serve the crown,
With virtues only proper to the gown;
Or had the rankness of the soil been freed
From cockle, that oppress'd the noble seed;
David for him his tuneful harp had strung,
And heaven had wanted one immortal song.
But wild ambition loves to slide, not stand,
And fortune's ice prefers to virtue's land.
Achitophel, grown weary to possess
A lawful fame, and lazy happiness,
Disdain'd the golden fruit to gather free,
And lent the crowd his arm to shake the tree.
Now, manifest of crimes contrived long since,
He stood at bold defiance with his prince;

Held up the buckler of the people's cause
Against the crown, and sculk'd behind the laws.
The wish'd occasion of the plot he takes;
Some circumstances finds, but more he makes:
By buzzing emissaries fills the ears
Of listening crowds with jealousies and fears
Of arbitrary counsels brought to light,
And proves the king himself a Jebusite.
Weak arguments! which yet he knew full well
Were strong with people easy to rebel.
For, govern'd by the moon, the giddy Jews
Tread the same track when she the prime renews;
And once in twenty years, their scribes record,
By natural instinct they change their lord.

From Absalom and Achitophel.

DESCRIPTION OF THE POET SHADWELL, UNDER THE NAME OF OG.

Now stop your noses, readers, all and some,
For here 's a tun of midnight work to come—
Og from a treason-tavern rolling home.
Round as a globe, and liquor'd every chink,
Goodly and great he sails behind his link;
With all this bulk there 's nothing lost in Og,
For every inch that is not fool is rogue:
A monstrous mass of foul corrupted matter,
As all the devils had spew'd to make the batter;
When wine has given him courage to blaspheme,
He curses God, but God before curst him;
And, if man could have reason, none has more,
That made his paunch so rich, and him so poor.
With wealth he was not trusted, for heaven knew
What 'twas of old to pamper up a Jew;
To what would he on quail and pheasant swell,
That ev'n on tripe and carrion could rebel?
But tho' heaven made him poor, with reverence speaking,
He never was a poet of God's making;
The midwife laid her hand on his thick skull,
With this prophetic blessing—Be thou dull;
Drink, swear, and roar, forbear no lewd delight
Fit for thy bulk, do any thing but write:
Thou art of lasting make, like thoughtless men,
A strong nativity—but for the pen!
Eat opium, mingle arsenic in thy drink,
Still thou mayst live, avoiding pen and ink.

I see, I see, 'tis counsel given in vain,
For treason botcht in rhyme will be thy bane;
Rhyme is the rock on which thou art to wreck,
'Tis fatal to thy fame and to thy neck:
Why should thy metre good king David blast?
A psalm of his will surely be thy last.
Dar'st thou presume in verse to meet thy foes,
Thou whom the penny pamphlet foil'd in prose?
Doeg, whom God for mankind's mirth has made,
O'ertops thy talent in thy very trade;
Doeg to thee, thy paintings are so coarse,
A poet is, though he's the poet's horse.
A double noose thou on thy neck dost pull,
For writing treason, and for writing dull;
To die for faction is a common evil,
But to be hang'd for nonsense is the devil:
Had thou the glories of thy king exprest,
Thy praises had been satire at the best;
But thou in clumsy verse, unlickt, unpointed,
Hast shamefully defied the Lord's anointed:
I will not rake the dunghill for thy crimes,
For who would read thy life that reads thy rhymes?
But of king David's foes be this the doom—
May all be like the young man Absalom!
And for my foes may this their blessing be—
To talk like Doeg, and to write like thee!

From Absalom and Achitophel.

LONDON.

London, thou great emporium of our isle
O thou too-bounteous, thou too-fruitful Nile!
How shall I praise or curse to thy desert?
Or separate thy sound from thy corrupted part?
I call'd thee Nile; the parallel will stand:
Thy tides of wealth o'erflow the fatten'd land;
Yet monsters from thy large increase we find,
Engender'd on the slime thou leav'st behind.
Sedition has not wholly seized on thee,
Thy nobler parts are from infection free.
Of Israel's tribe thou hast a numerous band,
But still the Canaanite is in the land.
Thy military chiefs are brave and true;
Nor are thy disenchanted burghers few.

The head is loyal which thy heart commands,
But what 's a head with two such gouty hands?
The wise and wealthy love the surest way,
And are content to thrive and to obey.
But wisdom is to sloth too great a slave;
None are so busy as the fool and knave.
Those let me curse; what vengeance will they urge,
Whose ordures neither plague nor fire can purge?
Nor sharp experience can to duty bring,
Nor angry heaven, nor a forgiving king!
In gospel-phrase their chapmen they betray;
Their shops are dens, the buyer is their prey.
The knack of trades is living on the spoil;
They boast ev'n when each other they beguile.
Customs to steal is such a trivial thing,
That 'tis their charter to defraud their king.
All hands unite of every jarring sect;
They cheat the country first, and then infect.
They for God's cause their monarchs dare dethrone,
And they'll be sure to make his cause their own.
Whether the plotting Jesuit laid the plan
Of murdering kings, or the French puritan,
Our sacrilegious sects their guides outgo,
And kings and kingly power would murder too.
What means that traitorous combination less,
Too plain t' invade, too shameful to confess?
But treason is not own'd when 'tis descried;
Successful crimes alone are justified.
The men who no conspiracy would find
Who doubts? but had it taken, they had join'd,
Join'd in a mutual covenant of defence;
At first without, at last against, their prince.
If sovereign right by sovereign power they scan,
The same bold maxim holds in God and man:
God were not safe, his thunder could they shun;
He should be forced to crown another son.
Thus, when the heir was from the vineyard thrown,
The rich possession was the murderer's own.
In vain to sophistry they have recourse:
By proving their's no plot, they prove 'tis worse—
Unmask'd rebellion, and audacious force;
Which though not actual, yet all eyes may see
'Tis working in th' immediate power to be;
For from pretended grievances they rise,
First to dislike, and after to despise.
Then cyclop-like in human flesh to deal,
Chop up a minister at every meal:

Perhaps not wholly to melt down the king;
But clip his regal rights within the ring.
From thence t' assume the power of peace and war;
And ease him by degrees of public care.
Yet, to consult his dignity and fame,
He should have leave to exercise the name;
And hold the cards while commons play'd the game.
For what can pow'r give more than food and drink,
To live at ease, and not be bound to think?
These are the cooler methods of their crime,
But their hot zealots think 'tis loss of time;
On utmost bounds of loyalty they stand,
And grin and whet like a Croatian band,
That waits impatient for the last command.
Thus outlaws open villany maintain,
They steal not, but in squadrons scour the plain:
And if their power the passengers subdue,
The most have right, the wrong is in the few.
Such impious axioms foolishly they show,
For in some soils republics will not grow:
Our temperate isle will no extremes sustain,
Of popular sway or arbitrary reign:
But slides between them both into the best,
Secure in freedom, in a monarch blest.
And though the climate vex'd with various winds,
Works through our yielding bodies on our minds,
The wholesome tempest purges what it breeds,
To recommend the calmness that succeeds.

From The Medal.

A SONG.

Go tell Amynta, gentle swain,
I would not die, nor dare complain:
Thy tuneful voice with numbers join,
Thy words will more prevail than mine.
To souls oppress'd, and dumb with grief,
The gods ordain this kind relief;
That music should in sounds convey,
What dying lovers dare not say.

A sigh or tear, perhaps, she'll give,
But love on pity cannot live.
Tell her that hearts for hearts were made,
And love with love is only paid.

Tell her my pains so fast increase,
That soon they will be past redress;
But ah! the wretch, that speechless lies,
Attends but death to close his eyes.

ON THE MONUMENT OF THE MARQUIS OF WINCHESTER.

He, who in impious times undaunted stood,
And 'midst rebellion durst be just and good;
Whose arms asserted, and whose sufferings more
Confirm'd the cause for which he fought before;
Rests here, rewarded by an heavenly prince,
For what his earthly could not recompense.
Pray, reader, that such times no more appear:
Or, if they happen, learn true honour here.
Ask of this age's faith and loyalty,
Which, to preserve them, heaven confined in thee.
Few subjects could a king like thine deserve:
And fewer, such a king so well could serve.
Blest king, blest subject, whose exalted state
By sufferings rose, and gave the law to fate.
Such souls are rare, but mighty patterns given
To earth, and meant for ornaments to heaven.

THE AFFECTIONATE MOTHER.

So had her children too; for charity
Was not more fruitful, or more kind, than she:
Each under other by degrees they grew;
A goodly perspective of distant view.
Anchises look'd not with so pleased a face,
In numbering o'er his future Roman race,
And marshalling the heroes of his name,
As in their order, next, to light they came.
Nor Cybele, with half so kind an eye,
Survey'd her sons and daughters of the sky;
Proud, shall I say, of her immortal fruit?
As far as pride with heavenly minds may suit.
Her pious love excell'd to all she bore;
New objects only multiplied it more.
And as the chosen found the pearly grain
As much as every vessel could contain;

As in the blissful vision each shall share
As much of glory as his soul can bear;
So did she love, and so dispense her care.
Her eldest thus, by consequence, was best,
As longer cultivated than the rest.
The babe had all that infant care beguiles,
And early knew his mother in her smiles:
But when dilated organs let in day
To the young soul, and gave it room to play,
At his first aptness, the maternal love
Those rudiments of reason did improve:
The tender age was pliant to command;
Like wax it yielded to the forming hand:
True to th' artificer, the labour'd mind
With ease was pious, generous, just, and kind;
Soft for impression, from the first prepared,
Till virtue with long exercise grew hard:
With every act confirm'd, and made at last
So durable as not to be effaced,
It turn'd to habit; and, from vices free,
Goodness resolved into necessity.

From Eleonora.

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From Eleonora.



Of the life of this author, little is recorded. He was the son of the Rev. Mr. Pomfret, Rector of Luton, in Bedfordshire; was born about 1667, and studied at Cambridge, where he took his Bachelor's degree in 1684, and that of Master in 1698. After he had entered into holy orders, he was presented to a valuable living, into which, however, his diocesan refused to induct him, in consequence of the misinterpretation of a passage in The Choice, in which it was alleged that Pomfret had written disparagingly of marriage. The unfortunate poet, in consequence of the delay in London which this misunderstanding occasioned, was visited with the small pox there, of which he died in 1703. His Choice obtained a popularity beyond its merits, as it can boast of little more than simplicity of sentiment, correctness of language, and harmony of versification.

MEANS OF BENEVOLENCE, HOSPITALITY, AND FRIENDSHIP.

I'd have a clear and competent estate,
That I might live genteelly, but not great:
As much as I could moderately spend;
A little more, sometimes t' oblige a friend.
Nor should the sons of poverty repine
Too much at fortune—they should taste of mine;
And all that objects of true pity were,
Should be relieved with what my wants could spare:
For that our Maker has too largely given,
Should be return'd in gratitude to Heaven.
A frugal plenty should my table spread;
With healthy, not luxurious, dishes spread:
Enough to satisfy, and something more,
To feed the stranger, and the neighbouring poor.
Strong meat indulges vice, and pampering food
Creates diseases, and inflames the blood.
But what 's sufficient to make nature strong,
And the bright lamp of life continue long,
I'd freely take; and, as I did possess,
The bounteous Author of my plenty bless.
I'd have a little vault, but always stored
With the best wines each vintage could afford.
Wine whets the wit, improves its native force,
And gives a pleasant flavour to discourse:
By making all our spirits debonair,
Throws off the lees, the sediment of care.
But as the greatest blessing Heaven lends
May be debauch'd, and serve ignoble ends;
So, but too oft, the grape's refreshing juice
Does many mischievous effects produce.
My house should no such rude disorders know,
As from high drinking consequently flow;

*

Nor would I use what was so kindly given,
To the dishonour of indulgent Heaven.
If any neighbour came, he should be free,
Used with respect, and not uneasy be,
In my retreat, or to himself or me.
What freedom, prudence, and right reason, gave,
All men may, with impunity, receive:
But the least swerving from their rule 's too much;
For what 's forbidden us, 'tis death to touch.
That life may be more comfortable yet,
And all my joys refined, sincere, and great;
I'd choose two friends, whose company would be
A great advance to my felicity:
Well-born, of humours suited to my own,
Discreet, and men as well as books have known:
Brave, generous, witty, and exactly free
From loose behaviour, or formality:
Airy and prudent; merry, but not light;
Quick in discerning, and in judging right:
Secret they should be, faithful to their trust;
In reasoning cool, strong, temperate, and just;
Obliging, open, without huffing, brave;
Brisk in gay talking, and in sober, grave:
Close in dispute, but not tenacious; tried
By solid reason, and let that decide:
Not prone to lust, revenge, or envious hate;
Nor busy medlers with intrigues of state:
Strangers to slander, and sworn foes to spite;
Not quarrelsome, but stout enough to fight;
Loyal, and pious, friends to Cæsar; true,
As dying martyrs, to their Maker too.
In their society I could not miss
A permanent, sincere, substantial bliss.

From The Choice.

THE SECRET GRIEF.

The happiest man that ever breathed on earth,
With all the glories of estate and birth,
Had yet some anxious care, to make him know,
No grandeur was above the reach of woe.
To be from all things that disquiet, free,
Is not consistent with humanity.
Youth, wit, and beauty, are such charming things,
O'er which, if affluence spreads her gaudy wings,

We think the person who enjoys so much,
No care can move, and no affliction touch;
Yet could we but some secret method find
To view the dark recesses of the mind,
We there might see the hidden seed of strife,
And woes in embryo ripening into life:
How some fierce lust, or boisterous passion, fills
The labouring spirit with prolific ills;
Pride, envy, or revenge, distract the soul,
And all right reason's godlike powers control;
But if she must not be allow'd to sway,
Though all without appears serene and gay,
A cankerous venom on the vitals preys,
And poisons all the comforts of his days.

MISERIES OF CIVIL WAR.

Here, in a crowd of drunken soldiers, stood
A wretched, poor, old man, besmear'd with blood;
And at his feet, just through the body run,
Struggling for life, was laid his only son;
By whose hard labour he was daily fed,
Dividing still, with pious care, his bread:
And while he mourn'd, with floods of aged tears,
The sole support of his decrepit years,
The barbarous mob, whose rage no limit knows,
With blasphemous derision, mock'd his woes.
There, under a wide oak, disconsolate,
And drown'd in tears, a mournful widow sate.
High in the boughs the murder'd father hung;
Beneath, the children round the mother clung:
They cried for food, but 'twas without relief:
For all they had to live upon was grief.
A sorrow so intense, such deep despair,
No creature, merely human, long could bear.
First in her arms her weeping babes she took,
And, with a groan, did to her husband look:
Then lean'd her head on theirs, and, sighing, cried,
Pity me, Saviour of the world! and died.
From this sad spectacle my eyes I turn'd,
Where sons their fathers, maids their lovers, mourn'd;
Friends for their friends, sisters for brothers, wept,
Prisoners of war, in chains, for slaughter kept:
Each every hour did the black message dread,
Which should declare the person loved was dead.

From Cruelty and Lust.

JOHN PHILIPS was born December 30, 1676, at Bampton, in Oxfordshire, of which place his father was minister. After being educated for some time at Winchester, he entered himself at Christ Church College, where he was distinguished as a scholar of great acquirements. The poetical work by which he first became known to the world, was The Splendid Shilling, an imitation of the lofty style of Milton, applied to an humble subject, which occasioned a degree of admiration far beyond what the intrinsic merits of the production deserved. In consequence of this questionable popularity, he was employed by the Tories to celebrate the victory of Blenheim, in opposition to Addison; and this he did by representing the Duke of Marlborough charging the French, sword in hand, in person, and mowing them down in the style of one of Homer's heroes. Philips was better employed when he wrote his next poem on Cyder, in which he imitated Virgil's Georgics. He also meditated a poem upon the Last Day, and had made some progress in the work, when he was carried off by an asthma, on February 15, 1708.

THE SPLENDID SHILLING.

"Sing, heavenly Muse!
Things unattempted yet, in prose or rhyme"—
A shilling, breeches, and chimeras dire.

Happy the man, who, void of cares and strife,
In silken or in leathern purse retains
A Splendid Shilling: he nor hears with pain
New oysters cried, nor sighs for cheerful ale;
But with his friends, when nightly mists arise,
To Juniper's Magpye or Town-hall repairs:
Where, mindful of the nymph whose wanton eye
Transfix'd his soul, and kindled amorous flames,
Chloe, or Phillis, he each circling glass
Wisheth her health, and joy, and equal love.
Meanwhile, he smokes, and laughs at merry tale,
Or pun ambiguous, or conundrum quaint.
But I, whom griping penury surrounds,
And hunger, sure attendant upon want,
With scanty offals, and small acid tiff
(Wretched repast!) my meagre corpse sustain:
Then solitary walk, or doze at home
In garret vile, and with a warming puff
Regale chill'd fingers; or from tube as black
As winter chimney, or well-polish'd jet,
Exhale mundungus, ill-perfuming scent:
Not blacker tube, nor of a shorter size,
Smokes Cambro-Briton (versed in pedigree,
Sprung from Cadwallador and Arthur, kings
Full famous in romantic tale) when he
O'er many a craggy hill and barren cliff,
Upon a cargo of famed Cestrian cheese,

High over-shadowing rides, with a design
To vend his wares, or at th' Arvonian mart,
Or Maridunum, or the ancient town
Yclep'd Brechinia, or where Vaga's stream
Encircles Ariconium, fruitful soil!
Whence flow nectareous wines, that well may vie
With Massic, Setin, or renown'd Falern.
Thus while my joyless minutes tedious flow,
With looks demure, and silent pace, a Dun,
Horrible monster! hated by gods and men,
To my aërial citadel ascends;
With vocal heel thrice thundering at my gate,
With hideous accent thrice he calls; I know
The voice ill-boding, and the solemn sound.
What should I do? or whither turn? Amazed,
Confounded, to the dark recess I fly
Of wood-hole; straight my bristling hairs erect
Through sudden fear; a chilly sweat bedews
My shuddering limbs, and (wonderful to tell!)
My tongue forgets her faculty of speech;
So horrible he seems! His faded brow
Entrench'd with many a frown, and conic beard,
And spreading band, admired by modern saints,
Disastrous acts forebode; in his right hand
Long scrolls of paper solemnly he waves,
With characters and figures dire inscribed,
Grievous to mortal eyes; (ye gods, avert
Such plagues from righteous men!) Behind him stalks
Another monster, not unlike himself,
Sullen of aspect, by the vulgar call'd
A Catchpole, whose polluted hands the gods
With force incredible, and magic charms,
First have endued: if he his ample palm
Should haply on ill-fated shoulder lay
Of debtor, straight his body, to the touch
Obsequious (as whilom knights were wont),
To some enchanted castle is convey'd,
Where gates impregnable, and coercive chains,
In durance strict detain him, till, in form
Of money, Pallas sets the captive free.
Beware, ye debtors! when ye walk, beware,
Be circumspect; oft with insidious ken
The caitiff eyes your steps aloof, and oft
Lies perdue in a nook or gloomy cave,
Prompt to enchant some inadvertent wretch
With his unhallow'd touch. So (poets sing)
Grimalkin, to domestic vermin sworn

An everlasting foe, with watchful eye
Lies nightly brooding o'er a chinky gap,
Protending her fell claws, to thoughtless mice
Sure ruin. So her disembowell'd web
Arachne, in a hall or kitchen, spreads
Obvious to vagrant flies: she secret stands
Within her woven cell; the humming prey,
Regardless of their fate, rush on the toils
Inextricable, nor will aught avail
Their arts, or arms, or shapes of lovely hue;
The wasp insidious, and the buzzing drone,
And butterfly proud of expanded wings
Distinct with gold, entangled in her snares,
Useless resistance make: with eager strides,
She towering flies to her expected spoils;
Then, with envenom'd jaws, the vital blood
Drinks of reluctant foes, and to her cave
Their bulky carcases triumphant drags.
So pass my days. But, when nocturnal shades
This world envelop, and th' inclement air
Persuades men to repel benumbing frosts
With pleasant wines, and crackling blaze of wood
Me, lonely sitting, nor the glimmering light
Of make-weight candle, nor the joyous talk
Of loving friend, delights; distress'd, forlorn,
Amidst the horrors of the tedious night,
Darkling I sigh, and feed with dismal thoughts
My anxious mind; or sometimes mournful verse
Indite, and sing of groves and myrtle shades,
Or desperate lady near a purling stream,
Or lover pendent on a willow tree.
Meanwhile I labour with eternal drought,
And restless wish, and rave; my parched throat
Finds no relief, nor heavy eyes repose;
But if a slumber haply does invade
My weary limbs, my fancy 's still awake,
Thoughtful of drink, and eager, in a dream,
Tipples imaginary pots of ale,
In vain; awake I find the settled thirst
Still gnawing, and the pleasant phantom curse.
Thus do I live, from pleasure quite debarr'd,
Nor taste the fruits that the sun's genial rays
Mature, john-apple, nor the downy peach,
Nor walnut in rough-furrow'd coat secure,
Nor medlar, fruit delicious in decay;
Afflictions great! yet greater still remain:
My Galligaskins, that have long withstood,

*

The winter's fury, and encroaching frosts,
By time subdued (what will not time subdue!)
An horrid chasm disclosed, with orifice
Wide, discontinuous; at which the winds
Eurus and Auster, and the dreadful force
Of Boreas, that congeals the Cronian waves,
Tumultuous enter with dire chilling blasts,
Portending agues. Thus a well-fraught ship,
Long sail'd secure, or through th' Ægean deep,
Or the Ionian, till cruising near
The Lilybean shore, with hideous crush
On Scylla, or Charybdis (dangerous rocks!)
She strikes rebounding; whence the shatter'd oak,
So fierce a shock unable to withstand,
Admits the sea; in at the gaping side
The crowding waves gush with impetuous rage,
Resistless, overwhelming; horrors seize
The mariners; death in their eyes appears;
They stare, they lave, they pump, they swear, they pray:
(Vain efforts!) still the battering waves rush in
Implacable, till, deluged by the foam,
The ship sinks foundering in the vast abyss.



This distinguished poet was born on the 21st of July, 1664, but the place of his birth is uncertain. He was educated at Westminster School, and afterwards was sent to St. John's College, Cambridge, through the kindness of the Earl of Dorset. After having finished his studies at the University, he commenced public life as an author, by writing, in conjunction with the Earl of Halifax, The Town Mouse and Country Mouse, for the purpose of ridiculing Dryden's Hind and Panther. This work procured such favourable notice for Prior, that he was appointed Secretary of Legation to the Congress at the Hague, where his conduct gave such satisfaction, that King William appointed him one of the gentlemen of the bed-chamber. In 1697, he was appointed Secretary to another embassy upon the treaty of Ryswick, and was afterwards raised to the office of Commissioner of Trade; and in 1701, he was chosen representative of East Grinstead. Nine years afterwards, he was sent privately to Paris, with proposals of peace from the British cabinet, a negotiation that ended in the peace of Utrecht. For his own share, however, in this unpopular measure, he was upon his return placed under arrest, and menaced with impeachment. After more than two years of confinement, he obtained his liberty, when he published, by subscription, a complete edition of his poems, in order to repair his dilapidated fortune. The attempt was successful, and he obtained from the proceeds an easy competence for the rest of his life. The death of Prior occurred on the 18th of September, 1721.

HENRY'S COURTSHIP OF EMMA.

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As with her stature, still her charms increased;
Through all the isle her beauty was confess'd.
Oh! what perfections must that virgin share,
Who fairest is esteem'd, where all are fair!
From distant shires repair the noble youth,
And find report for once had lessen'd truth.
By wonder first, and then by passion moved,
They came; they saw; they marvell'd; and they loved.
By public praises, and by secret sighs,
Each own'd the general power of Emma's eyes.
In tilts and tournaments the valiant strove
By glorious deeds to purchase Emma's love.
In gentle verse the witty told their flame,
And graced their choicest songs with Emma's name.
In vain they combated, in vain they writ:
Useless their strength, and impotent their wit.
Great Venus only must direct the dart,
Which else will never reach the fair one's heart,
Spite of th' attempts of force, and soft effects of art.
Great Venus must prefer the happy one:
In Henry's cause her favour must be shown:
And Emma, of mankind, must love but him alone.
While these in public to the castle came,
And by their grandeur justified their flame;

More secret ways the careful Henry takes;
His squires, his arms, and equipage forsakes:
In borrow'd name and false attire array'd,
Oft he finds means to see the beauteous maid.
When Emma hunts, in huntsman's habit drest,
Henry on foot pursues the bounding beast.
In his right hand his beechen pole he bears:
And graceful at his side his horn he wears.
Still to the glade, where she has bent her way,
With knowing skill he drives the future prey;
Bids her decline the hill, and shun the brake;
And shows the path her steed may safest take;
Directs her spear to fix the glorious wound;
Pleased in his toils to have her triumph crown'd;
And blows her praises in no common sound.
A falconer Henry is, when Emma hawks:
With her of tarsels and of lures he talks.
Upon his wrist the towering merlin stands,
Practised to rise and stoop at her commands.
And when superior now the bird has flown,
And headlong brought the tumbling quarry down;
With humble reverence he accosts the fair,
And with the honour'd feather decks her hair.
Yet still, as from the sportive field she goes,
His down-cast eye reveals his inward woes;
And by his look and sorrow is exprest,
A nobler game pursued than bird or beast.
A shepherd now along the plain he roves:
And, with his jolly pipe, delights the groves.
The neighbouring swains around the stranger throng,
Or to admire or emulate his song:
While with soft sorrow he renews his lays,
Nor heedful of their envy, nor their praise.
But, soon as Emma's eyes adorn the plain,
His notes he raises to a nobler strain,
With dutiful respect and studious fear;
Lest any careless sound offend her ear.
A frantic Gipsy now, the house he haunts,
And in wild phrases speaks dissembled wants.
With the fond maids in palmistry he deals:
They tell the secret first which he reveals;
Says who shall wed, and who shall be beguiled;
What groom shall get, and squire maintain, the child.
But, when bright Emma would her fortune know,
A softer look unbends his opening brow;
With trembling awe he gazes on her eye,
And in soft accents forms the kind reply;

That she shall prove as fortunate as fair;
And Hymen's choicest gifts are all reserved for her.
Now oft had Henry changed his sly disguise,
Unmark'd by all but beauteous Emma's eyes:
Oft had found means alone to see the dame,
And at her feet to breathe his amorous flame;
And oft the pangs of absence to remove
By letters, soft interpreters of love:
Till Time and Industry (the mighty two
That bring our wishes nearer to our view)
Made him perceive, that the inclining fair
Received his vows with no reluctant ear;
That Venus had confirm'd her equal reign,
And dealt to Emma's heart a share of Henry's pain.

From Henry and Emma.

CHARITY:

A PARAPHRASE ON THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER OF THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

Did sweeter sounds adorn my flowing tongue,
Than ever man pronounced, or angels sung;
Had I all knowledge, human and divine,
That thought can reach, or science can define;
And had I power to give that knowledge birth,
In all the speeches of the babbling earth;
Did Shadrach's zeal my glowing breast inspire,
To weary tortures, and rejoice in fire;
Or had I faith like that which Israel saw
When Moses gave them miracles and law:
Yet, gracious Charity! indulgent guest,
Were not thy power exerted in my breast,
Those speeches would send up unheeded prayer;
That scorn of life would be but wild despair;
A tymbal's sound was better than my voice;
My faith were form, my eloquence were noise.
Charity, decent, modest, easy, kind,
Softens the high, and rears the abject mind,
Knows with just reins and gentle hand to guide
Betwixt vile shame and arbitrary pride.
Not soon provoked, she easily forgives;
And much she suffers, as she much believes.
Soft peace she brings wherever she arrives;
She builds our quiet, as she forms our lives;

Lays the rough paths of peevish nature even,
And opens in each heart a little heaven.
Each other gift, which God on man bestows,
Its proper bound and due restriction knows;
To one fixt purpose dedicates its power,
And, finishing its act, exists no more.
Thus, in obedience to what Heaven decrees,
Knowledge shall fail, and prophecy shall cease;
But lasting Charity's more ample sway,
Nor bound by time, nor subject to decay,
In happy triumph shall for ever live,
And endless good diffuse, and endless praise receive.
As, through the artist's intervening glass,
Our eye observes the distant planets pass,
A little we discover, but allow
That more remains unseen, than art can show:
So, whilst our mind its knowledge would improve
(Its feeble eye intent on things above),
High as we may, we lift our reason up,
By Faith directed, and confirm'd by Hope:
Yet we are able only to survey
Dawning of beams, and promises of day.
Heaven's fuller effluence mocks our dazzled sight;
Too great its swiftness, and too strong its light.
But soon the mediate clouds shall be dispell'd;
The sun shall soon be face to face beheld
In all his robes, with all his glory on,
Seated sublime on his meridian throne.
Then constant Faith and holy Hope shall die,
One lost in certainty, and one in joy:
Whilst thou, more happy power, fair Charity,
Triumphant sister, greatest of the three,
Thy office and thy nature still the same,
Lasting thy lamp, and unconsumed thy flame,
Shalt still survive—
Shalt stand before the host of heaven confest,
For ever blessing, and for ever blest.

THE THIEF AND THE CORDELIER: A BALLAD.

Who has e'er been at Paris, must needs know the Greve,
The fatal retreat of th' unfortunate brave;

Where Honour and Justice most oddly contribute
To ease heroes' pains by a halter and gibbet.
Derry down, down, hey derry down.

There Death breaks the shackles which Force had put on,
And the hangman completes what the judge but begun;
There the squire of the pad, and the knight of the post,
Find their pains no more balk'd, and their hopes no more crost.
Derry down, &c.

Great claims are there made, and great secrets are known;
And the king, and the law, and the thief, has his own:
But my hearers cry out, What a deuce dost thou ail?
Cut off thy reflections, and give us thy tale.
Derry down, &c.

'Twas there then, in civil respect to harsh laws,
And for want of false witness to back a bad cause,
A Norman, though late, was obliged to appear:
And who to assist, but a grave Cordelier?
Derry down, &c.

The Squire, whose good grace was to open the scene,
Seem'd not in great haste that the show should begin:
Now fitted the halter, now traversed the cart;
And often took leave, but was loth to depart.
Derry down, &c.

What frightens you thus, my good son? says the Priest:
You murder'd, are sorry, and have been confest.
O Father! my sorrow will scarce save my bacon;
For 'twas not that I murder'd, but that I was taken.
Derry down, &c.

Pugh! pr'ythee ne'er trouble thy head with such fancies:
Rely on the aid you shall have from Saint Francis:
If the money you promised be brought to the chest,
You have only to die: let the church do the rest.
Derry down, &c.

And what will folks say, if they see you afraid?
It reflects upon me, as I knew not my trade:

Courage, friend; for to-day is your period of sorrow;
And things will go better, believe me, to-morrow.
Derry down, &c.

To-morrow! our hero replied in a fright:
He that 's hang'd before noon, ought to think of to-night.
Tell your beads, quoth the Priest, and be fairly truss'd up,
For you surely to-night shall in Paradise sup.
Derry down, &c.

Alas! quoth the Squire, howe'er sumptuous the treat,
Parbleu! I shall have little stomach to eat;
I should therefore esteem it great favour and grace,
Would you be so kind as to go in my place.
Derry down, &c.

That I would, quoth the Father, and thank you to boot;
But our actions, you know, with our duty must suit.
The feast I proposed to you, I cannot taste;
For this night, by our order, is mark'd for a fast.
Derry down, &c.

Then, turning about to the hangman, he said,
Dispatch me, I pr'ythee, this troublesome blade;
For thy cord and my cord both equally tie,
And we live by the gold for which other men die.
Derry down, &c.

CHALLENGE TO HUMAN WISDOM.

Of beasts and creeping insects shall we trace
The wondrous nature, and the various race;
Or wild or tame, or friend to man or foe,
Of us what they, or what of them we know?
Tell me, ye studious, who pretend to see
Far into Nature's bosom, whence the bee
Was first inform'd her venturous flight to steer
Through trackless paths, and an abyss of air?
Whence she avoids the slimy marsh, and knows
The fertile hills where sweeter herbage grows,
And honey-making flowers their opening buds disclose?
How from the thicken'd mist, and setting sun,
Finds she the labour of her day is done?
Who taught her against winds and rains to strive,
To bring her burden to the certain hive;
And through the liquid fields again to pass
Duteous, and hearkening to the sounding brass?

And, O thou sluggard, tell me, why the ant,
'Midst summer's plenty, thinks of winter's want,
By constant journeys careful to prepare
Her stores; and, bringing home the corny ear,
By what instruction does she bite the grain,
Lest, hid in earth, and taking root again,
It might elude the foresight of her care?
Distinct in either insect's deed appear
The marks of thought, contrivance, hope, and fear.

From Solomon: Book I.

A LEARNED LADY.

You know a certain lady, Dick,
Who saw me when I last was sick:
She kindly talk'd, at least three hours,
Of plastic forms, and mental powers;
Described our pre-existing station
Before this vile terrene creation;
And lest I should be wearied, madam,
To cut things short, come down to Adam;
From whence, as fast as she was able



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And lest I should be wearied, madam,
To cut things short, come down to Adam;
From whence, as fast as she was able,
She drowns the world, and builds up Babel:
Through Syria, Persia, Greece, she goes,
And takes the Romans in the close.

From Alma: Canto II.



Of the life of this poet little comparatively is known. He was born at Handley in Worcestershire, but in what year is uncertain, and was educated at Westminster School, after which he was entered at Christ Church, Oxford. Both at school and college he was distinguished by the splendour of his talents and greatness of his attainments, and, like Cowley, he wrote poetry even in boyhood; but his high powers were rendered of no avail by a reckless career of dissipation, with which the heads of the University were so disgusted, that, after a long endurance of his irregularities, they expelled him from his college in 1705. Smith repaired to London, where his talents might have procured him respectability and wealth; but, unfortunately, he still continued to indulge in those excesses, which unfitted him for regular application. He died in July, 1710.

MUSIC.

Music, soft charm of heaven and earth,
Whence didst thou borrow thy auspicious birth?
Or art thou of eternal date?
Sire to thyself, thyself as old as Fate,
Ere the rude ponderous mass
Of earth and waters from their chaos sprang,
The morning stars their anthems sang,
And nought in heaven was heard but melody and love.

Myriads of spirits, forms divine,
The Seraphin, with the bright host
Of angels, thrones, and heavenly powers,
Worship before th' eternal shrine;
Their happy privilege in hymns and anthems boast,
In love and wonder pass their blissful hours.

Nor let the lower world repine
The massy orb in which we sluggards move,
As if sequester'd from the arts divine:
Here 's Music too,
As ours a rival were to the world above.

From an Ode in Praise of Music

ODE FOR THE YEAR 1705.

Janus, did ever to thy wondering eyes,
So bright a scene of triumph rise?
Did ever Greece or Rome such laurels wear,
As crown'd the last auspicious year?

*

When first at Blenheim ANNE her ensigns spread,
And Marlborough to the field the shouting squadrons led.
In vain the hills and streams oppose,
In vain the hollow ground in faithless hillocks rose:
To the rough Danube's winding shore,
His shatter'd foes the conquering hero bore.

They see, with staring haggard eyes,
The rapid torrent roll, the foaming billows rise;
Amazed, aghast, they turn, but find,
In Marlborough's arms, a surer fate behind.
Now his red sword aloft impends,
Now on their shrinking heads descends:
Wild and distracted with their fears,
They justling plunge amidst the sounding deeps;
The flood away the struggling squadrons sweeps,
And men, and arms, and horses, whirling bears.
The frighted Danube to the sea retreats,
The Danube soon the flying ocean meets,
Flying the thunder of great ANNA's fleets.

Rooke on the seas asserts her sway,
Flames o'er the trembling ocean play,
And clouds of smoke involve the day.
Affrighted Europe hears the cannons roar,
And Afric echoes from its distant shore.
The French, unequal in the fight,
In force superior, take their flight.
Factions in vain the hero's worth decry,
In vain the vanquish'd triumph, while they fly.

Now, Janus, with a future view,
The glories of her reign survey,
Which shall o'er France her arms display,
And kingdoms now her own subdue.
Lewis, for oppression born;
Lewis, in his turn, shall mourn,
While his conquer'd happy swains
Shall hug their easy wish'd-for chains.
Others, enslaved by victory,
Their subjects, as their foes, oppress;
ANNA conquers but to free,
And governs but to bless.

THIS poet was born in London, in 1663. He commenced his education at Westminster School, under the famous Dr. Busby, and completed it at Christ Church College, where he was famed for laborious diligence and literary acquirements. In 1692, he took the degree of Doctor of Civil Law, and was admitted advocate at Doctors' Commons; but poetry, general literature, and fashionable dissipation, had more charms for him than the profession he had adopted. He neglected his business, by which his revenues were impoverished; and although his friends were kind and influential, his indolence and thoughtlessness counteracted all their efforts in his behalf. He died in 1712. The chief merit of King, as a poet, was his lively vein of humour, in which he equalled the most distinguished of his contemporaries.

RULES FOR GIVING A DINNER.

Next, let discretion moderate your cost,
And when you treat, three courses be the most.
Let never fresh machines your pastry try,
Unless grandees or magistrates are by:
Then you may put a dwarf into a pie.
Or, if you 'd fright an alderman and mayor,
Within a pasty lodge a living hare;
Then 'midst their gravest furs shall mirth arise,
And all the guild pursue with joyful cries.
Crowd not your table: let your number be
Not more than seven, and never less than three.
'Tis the dessert that graces all the feast,
For an ill end disparages the rest:
A thousand things well done, and one forgot,
Defaces obligation by that blot.
Make your transparent sweet-meats truly nice,
With Indian sugar and Arabian spice:
And let your various creams encircled be
With swelling fruit just ravish'd from the tree.
Let plates and dishes be from China brought,
With lively paint and earth transparent wrought.
The feast now done, discourses are renew'd,
And witty arguments with mirth pursued.
The cheerful master, 'midst his jovial friends,
His glass "to their best wishes" recommends.
The grace-cup follows to his Sovereign's health,
And to his country, "Plenty, peace, and wealth."
Performing then the piety of grace,
Each man that pleases re-assumes his place;
While at his gate, from such abundant store,
He showers his god-like blessings on the poor.

From The Art of Cookery.

REWARD OF CRUEL COUNSEL.

For nine years' space Egypt had fruitless stood,
Without the aid of Nile's prolific flood;
When Thrasius said, "That blessing to regain,
The gods require a stranger should be slain."
"Be thou the man," the fierce Busiris cries:
"I'll make th' adviser his own sacrifice;
Nor can he blame the voice by which he dies."
Perillus, first and last of's trade,
For Phalaris a Bull had made:
With fire beneath, and water hot,
He put the brazier in the pot,
And gave him, like an honest fellow,
Precedence in his Bull to bellow.
The tyrants both did right: no law more just
Than "He that thinks of ill, should feel it first."

From The Art of Love.

HERCULES AND OMPHALE.

When Hercules, by labours done,
Had proved himself to be Jove's son,
By peace which he to earth had given,
Deserved to have his rest in heaven;
Envy, that strives to be unjust,
Resolved to mortify him first;
And, that he should enamour'd be
Of a proud jilt, call'd Omphalé,
Who should his heroship expose
By spinning hemp in women's clothes:
Her mind she did vouchsafe one day
Thus to her lover to display:
"Come, quickly, sir, off with this skin:
Think you, I'll let a tanner in?
If you of lions talk, or boars,
You certainly turn out of doors.
Your club's abundantly too thick
For one shall move a fiddle-stick.
What should you do with all those arrows?
I will have nothing kill'd but sparrows.
Heccy, this day you may remember;
For you shall see a lady's chamber.
Let me be rightly understood:
What I intend is for your good.

In boddice I design to lace ye,
And so among my maids I 'll place ye.
When you 're genteeler grown, and thinner,
May be I 'll call you up to dinner.
With arms so brawny, fists so red,
You 'll scrub the rooms, or make the bed.
You can't stick pins, or frieze my hair—
Bless me ! you 've nothing of an air.
You 'll ne'er come up to working point :
Your fingers all seem out of joint.
Then, besides, Heccy, I must tell ye,
An idle hand has empty belly :
Therefore this morning I'll begin,
Try how your clumsiness will spin.
You are my shadow, do you see ;
Your hope, your thought, your wish, all be
Invented and controll'd by me.
Look up whene'er I laugh ; look down
With trembling horror, if I frown.
Say as I say : servants can't lie.
Your truth is my propriety.
Nay, you should be to torture brought,
Were I but jealous you transgress'd in thought ;
Or if from Jove your single wish should crave
The fate of not continuing still my slave.

From The Art of Love.

MUSIC AN AUXILIARY TO FEMALE CHARMS.

Virgins should not unskill'd in Music be ;
For what 's more like themselves than harmony ?
Let not vice use it only to betray,
As syrens by their songs entice their prey.
Let it with sense, with voice, and beauty, join,
Grateful to eyes and ear, and to the mind divine :
For there 's a double grace when pleasing strings
Are touch'd by her that more delightful sings.
Thus Orpheus did the rage of deserts quell,
And charm'd the monstrous instruments of hell.
New walls to Thebes Amphion thus began,
Whilst to the work officious marble ran.
Thus with his harp and voice Arion rode
On the mute fish safe through the rolling flood.

From The Art of Love.

Was born in the city of Exeter, in 1671, and studied at Magdalen Hall, Oxford. He entered into holy orders in 1700, and was presented to the vicarage of Willoughby, in Warwickshire. In 1707, he became Doctor in Divinity, and was afterwards presented to several church preferments. Although he led a peaceful life, he was suspected of sharing in Bishop Atterbury's conspiracy; in consequence of which he was taken into custody, and subjected to examination; but as nothing appeared to criminate him, he was set at liberty. After this, he continued unmolested till his death, which occurred in 1736. The poems of Yalden are chiefly lyrical, and although he was an imitator of Cowley, his verse exhibits a rough dignity and vigour that evince considerable original power. His Hymn to Darkness, which he wrote in imitation of, or perhaps we should rather say in rivalry to, Cowley, is one of his best productions.

HYMN TO DARKNESS.

Darkness, thou first great parent of us all,
Thou art our great original:
Since from thy universal womb
Does all thou shad'st below, thy numerous offspring, come.

Thy wondrous birth is ev'n to Time unknown,
Or, like Eternity, thou'dst none;
Whilst Light did its first being owe
Unto that awful shade it dares to rival now.

Say, in what distant region dost thou dwell,
To reason inaccessible?
From form and duller matter free,
Thou soar'st above the reach of man's philosophy.

Involved in thee, we first receive our breath,
Thou art our refuge too in death:
Great Monarch of the Grave and Womb,
Where'er our souls shall go, to thee our bodies come.

The silent globe is struck with awful fear,
When thy majestic shades appear:
Thou dost compose the air and sea,
And earth a sabbath keeps, sacred to Rest and Thee.

In thy serener shades our ghosts delight,
And court the umbrage of the Night;
In vaults and gloomy caves they stray,
But fly the Morning's beams, and sicken at the Day.

Though solid bodies dare exclude the light,
Nor will the brightest ray admit;
No substance can thy force repel,
Thou reign'st in depths below, dost in the centre dwell.

The sparkling gems, and ore in mines below,
To thee their beauteous lustre owe;
Though form'd within the womb of Night,
Bright as their fire they shine, with native rays of light.

When thou dost raise thy venerable head,
And art in genuine Night array'd,
Thy Negro beauties then delight;
Beauties, like polish'd jet, with their own darkness bright.

Thou dost thy smiles impartially bestow,
And know'st no difference here below:
All things appear the same by thee,
Though Light distinction makes, thou giv'st equality.

Calm as the bless'd above the anchorites dwell,
Within their peaceful gloomy cell:
Their minds with heavenly joys are fill'd;
The pleasures Light denies, thy shades for ever yield.

In caves of Night, the oracles of old
Did all their mysteries unfold:
Darkness did first Religion grace,
Gave terrors to the God, and reverence to the place.

When the Almighty did on Horeb stand,
Thy shades enclosed the hallow'd land;
In clouds of Night he was array'd,
And venerable Darkness his pavilion made.

When he appear'd arm'd in his power and might,
He veil'd the beatific light;
When terrible with majesty,
In tempests he gave laws, and clad himself in thee.

Ere the foundation of the earth was laid,
Or brighter firmament was made;
Ere matter, time, or place, was known,
Thou, monarch Darkness, sway'dst these spacious realms alone.

But, now the Moon (though gay with borrow'd light)
Invades thy scanty lot of Night:
By rebel subjects thou 'rt betray'd,
The anarchy of Stars depose their monarch Shade.

Yet fading Light its empire must resign,
And Nature's power submit to thine:
An universal ruin shall erect thy throne,
And Fate confirm thy kingdom evermore thy own.

THE SATYR'S ADDRESS.

Five Satyrs of the woodland sort,
Thought politicians then;
Their ears prick'd up, their noses short,
And brows adorn'd like aldermen;
With asses' hoofs, great goggle eyes,
And ample chins of Be—m's size;

To Jove tript up with an address,
In favour of the plains:
That it would please him to suppress
All heats and colds, his winds and rains;
The sun that he'd extinguish too,
And in the skies hang something new.

"My wise reforming friends," quoth Jove,
"Our elements are good!
We manage for the best above,
Though not so rightly understood;
But since such profound Squires are sent,
We'll treat you like the cream of Kent."

Then Jove brought out ethereal fire
In a gilt chafing-dish:
The sparkling flame they all admire,
'Twas fine, they vow'd, as heart could wish:
They gaped, they grinn'd, they jump'd about!
"Jove, give us that, the sun put out!"

The charming flames they all embrace,
Which, urged by Nature's laws,
Their shaggy hides set in a blaze,
And soundly singed their paws;
In corners then they sneak'd with terror dumb,
And o'er th' immortal pavements scud it home.

Thomas Parnell was born in Dublin, in 1679, and was the son of a gentleman of Cheshire, who, at the Restoration, migrated to Ireland, where he settled and purchased an estate. The poet, after receiving the elements of education at a grammar school, was admitted into the University of Dublin; and the usual routine of study being finished, he was ordained a deacon in 1700, by a dispensation from the Bishop of Derry, as he was still under the canonical age. Five years afterwards, he was promoted to the archdeaconry of Clogher.

Up to this period of his life, Parnell had sided with the Tory party; but on the ejection of the latter from office, towards the end of the reign of Queen Anne, he found it convenient to alter his political principles: he therefore stepped over to the Whigs, by whom he was received with open arms. As his talents were known, he was deemed a valuable auxiliary to the cause, and Parnell, who hungered for preferment, although his private fortune was suffic ently abundant, endeavoured to recommend himself to notice by his eloquence in the pulpits of London. But from the new ministry he received nothing more substantial than caresses and empty protestations, and the death of the Queen put an end to his hopes of promotion in the church by political subserviency. To embitter his disappointment, he had also lost, in 1712, his amiable wife, to whom he was affectionately devoted. These calamities preying upon a sensitive mind, drove him to the miserable refuge of intemperance, a habit that grew upon him towards the latter part of his life, although not so openly as to occasion general scandal. His private friends, however, were not unmindful of his interests, and, through the recommendation of Swift, Archbishop King presented him to the vicarage of Finglass, in the diocese of Dublin, worth 400*l.* per annum. But Parnell did not long enjoy this promotion. Only a year after his appointment, and while he was on his way to Ireland, to enter into his new charge, he sickened and died at Chester, in July, 1717, in the thirty-eighth year of his age.

Parnell was an industrious writer, and seems to have published many pieces anonymously in the periodicals of the day; but his principal productions were carefully selected by his friends Pope and Goldsmith, and published in a separate form. These are, The Rise of Woman, The Fairy Tale of Sir Topaz, The Vigil of Venus, The Bookworm, and a sacred poem of considerable length, called The Gift of Poetry. In these there does not appear either much originality or great power of imagination; but their chief excellence consists in that easy and graceful flow of ideas and language, which always gives pleasure, without creating either astonishment or delight. His works, therefore, have deservedly continued to be popular to the present day, while many of his contemporaries of greater pretensions have sunk into neglect.

The poem by which Parnell is chiefly known is The Hermit, a production that has continued since his own time to be an especial favourite with every class of readers. The story, indeed, is not original, as it is to be found in More's Dialogues, and Howel's Letters, and can probably be traced to an eastern origin; but its merits were so obvious, that both Parnell and Voltaire adopted it, the latter having introduced it, with some modifications, into his tale of Zadig. Our countryman, however, has adorned it with a greater variety of events, and elicited from it a higher morality. The Hermit is a revolving panorama of beautiful pictures, each perfect in itself; and with the various shades and gradations of a summer day, and amidst the fairest varieties of English scenery, we have the venerable pilgrim and his companion, the mansion of ostentatious hospitality, the churl's squalid abode, the kind host, the guide, and, finally, the angelic appearance, all full of life, and combining with each other in the most admirable unison to produce the great result. The versification is also worthy of the subject, being full of harmony, but always changing, like a piece of carefully composed music, with the variations of the tale. From these circumstances the Hermit will always continue to be popular, even should the other productions of Parnell cease to charm, and be consigned to forgetfulness.



PARNELL.

CHRIST'S AGONY IN THE GARDEN.

For what was all the gracious Saviour's stay,
Whilst here he trod in life's encumber'd way,
But troubled patience, persecuted breath,
Neglected sorrows, and afflicting death;
Approach, ye sinners; think the garden shows
His bloody sweat of full arising throes;
Approach his grief, and hear him thus complain,
Through David's person, and in David's strain.
  Oh, save me, God, thy floods about me roll,
Thy wrath divine hath overflow'd my soul:
I come at length where rising waters drown,
And sink in deep affliction, deeply down.
Deceitful snares, to bring me to the dead,
Lie ready placed in every path I tread.

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H. Corbould. C. Heath.

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Lie ready placed in every path I tread.

And Hell itself, with all that Hell contains,
Of fiends accursed, and dreadful change of pains;
To daunt firm will, and cross the good design'd,
With strong temptations fasten on the mind;
Such grief, such sorrows, in amazing view,
Distracted fears and heaviness pursue.
Ye sages, deeply read in human frame,
The passions' causes, and their wild extreme;
Where moved an object more opposed to bliss,
What other agony could equal his?

From David.

ADVICE TO AN OLD BEAUTY.

'Tis true, when beauty dawns with early fire,
And hears the flattering tongues of soft desire,
If not from virtue, from its gravest ways
The soul with pleasing avocation strays.
But beauty gone, 'tis easier to be wise;
As harpers better by the loss of eyes.
Henceforth retire, reduce your roving airs,
Haunt less the plays, and more the public prayers;
Reject the Mechlin head, and gold brocade,
Go pray, in sober Norwich crape array'd.
Thy pendant-diamonds let thy Fanny take
(Their trembling lustre shows how much you shake);
Or bid her wear thy necklace row'd with pearl—
You'll find your Fanny an obedient girl.
So for the rest, with less incumbrance hung,
You walk through life, unmingled with the young,
And view the shade and substance as you pass
With joint endeavour trifling at the glass;
Or Folly drest, and rambling all her days,
To meet her counterpart, and grow by praise:
Yet still sedate yourself, and gravely plain,
You neither fret nor envy at the vain.

SONG OF HEZEKIAH.

I said, My God, when in the loath'd disease
Thy Prophet's words cut off my future days,
Now to the grave, with mournful haste, I go,
Now Death unbars his sable gates below.

*

How might my years by course of nature last!
But thou pronounced it, and the prospect pass'd.
I said, My God, thy servant now no more
Shall in thy temple's sacred courts adore;
No more on earth with living man converse,
Shrunk in a cold uncomfortable hearse.
My life, like tents which wandering shepherds raise,
Proves a short dwelling, and removes at ease.
My sins pursue me; see the deadly band!
My God, who sees them, cuts me from the land;
As when a weaver finds his labour sped,
Swift from the beam he parts the fastening thread.
With pining sickness all from night to day,
From day to night, he makes my strength decay:
Reckoning the time, I roll with restless groans,
Till, with a lion's force, he crush my bones;
New morning dawns, but, like the morning past,
'Tis day, 'tis night, and still my sorrows last.
Now, screaming like the crane, my words I spoke,
Now, like the swallow, chattering quick, and broke;
Now, like the doleful dove, when on the plains
Her mourning tone affects the listening swains.
To heaven, for aid, my wearying eyes I throw,
At length they 're weary'd quite, and sink with woe.
From Death's arrest, for some delays, I sue;
Thou, Lord, who judged me, thou reprieve me, too.
Rapture of joy! what can thy servant say?
He sent his Prophet to prolong my day;
Through my glad limbs I feel the wonder run,
Thus said the Lord, and this Himself has done.
Soft shall I walk, and, well secured from fears,
Possess the comforts of my future years.
Keep soft, my heart, keep humble, while they roll,
Nor e'er forget my bitterness of soul.
'Tis by the means thy sacred words supply,
That mankind live, but in peculiar I;
A second grant thy mercy pleased to give,
And my raised spirits doubly seem to live.
Behold the time! when peace adorn'd my reign,
'Twas then I felt my stroke of humbling pain;
Corruption dug her pit, I fear'd to sink,
God loved my soul, and snatch'd me from the brink.
He turn'd my follies from his gracious eye,
As men who pass accounts, and cast them by.
What mouth has death, which can thy praise proclaim?
What tongue the grave, to speak thy glorious name?

Or will the senseless dead exult with mirth,
Moved to their hope by promises on earth?
The living, Lord, the living only praise,
The living only fit to sing thy lays:
These feel thy favours, these thy temple see;
These raise the song, as I this day to thee.
Nor will thy truth the present only reach,
This the good fathers shall their offspring teach;
Report the blessings which adorn my page,
And hand their own, with mine, from age to age.
So, when the Maker heard his creature crave,
So kindly rose his ready Will to save:
Then march we solemn towards the temple-door,
While all our joyful music sounds before;
There, on this day, through all my life appear,
When this comes round in each returning year;
There strike the strings, our voices jointly raise,
And let his dwellings hear my songs of praise.

From Hezekiah.

ON BISHOP BURNET'S BEING SET ON FIRE IN HIS CLOSET.

From that dire era, bane to Sarum's pride,
Which broke his schemes, and laid his friends aside,
He talks and writes that Popery will return,
And we, and he, and all his works, will burn.
What touch'd himself was almost fairly proved:
(Oh, far from Britain be the rest removed!)
For, as of late he meant to bless the age,
With flagrant Prefaces of party rage,
O'er-wrought with passion, and the subject's weight,
Lolling, he nodded in his elbow-seat;
Down fell the candle; Grease and Zeal conspire,
Heat meets with heat, and Pamphlets burn their Sire.
Here crawls a Preface on its half-burn'd maggots,
And there an Introduction brings its faggots:
Then roars the Prophet of the Northern Nation,
Scorch'd by a flaming speech on Moderation.
Unwarn'd by this, go on, the realm to fright,
Thou Briton vaunting in thy second-sight?
In such a ministry you safely tell,
How much you'd suffer, if Religion fell.

ON MRS. ARABELLA FERMOR LEAVING LONDON.

From town fair Arabella flies:
The beaux unpowder'd grieve;
The rivers play before her eyes;
The breezes, softly breathing, rise;
The Spring begins to live.

Her lovers swore, they must expire;
Yet quickly find their ease;
For, as she goes, their flames retire,
Love thrives before a nearer fire,
Esteem by distant rays.

Yet soon the fair one will return,
When Summer quits the plain:
Ye rivers, pour the weeping urn;
Ye breezes, sadly sighing, mourn;
Ye lovers, burn again.

'Tis constancy enough in love
That Nature's fairly shown:
To search for more, will fruitless prove;
Romances, and the turtle dove,
The virtue boast alone.

OSTENTATIOUS HOSPITALITY.

Now sunk the sun; the closing hour of day
Came onward, mantled o'er with sober grey;
Nature in silence bid the world repose;
When near the road a stately palace rose:
There by the moon through ranks of trees they pass,
Whose verdure crown'd their sloping sides of grass.
It chanced the noble master of the dome
Still made his house the wandering stranger's home:
Yet still the kindness, from a thirst of praise,
Proved the vain flourish of expensive ease.
The pair arrive: the liveried servants wait:
Their lord receives them at the pompous gate.
The table groans with costly piles of food,
And all is more than hospitably good.
Then led to rest, the day's long toil they drown,
Deep sunk in sleep, and silk, and neaps of down.

At length 'tis morn, and at the dawn of day,
Along the wide canals the zephyrs play:
Fresh o'er the gay parterres the breezes creep,
And shake the neighbouring wood to banish sleep.
Up rise the guests, obedient to the call:
An early banquet deck'd the splendid hall;
Rich luscious wine a golden goblet graced,
Which the kind master forced the guests to taste.
Then, pleased and thankful, from the porch they go;
And, but the landlord, none had cause of woe;
His cup was vanish'd; for in secret guise
The younger guest purloin'd the glittering prize.
As one who spies a serpent in his way,
Glistening and basking in the summer ray,
Disorder'd stops to shun the danger near,
Then walks with faintness on, and looks with fear;
So seem'd the Sire; when far upon the road,
The shining spoil his wily partner show'd.
He stopp'd with silence, walk'd with trembling heart,
And much he wish'd, but durst not ask, to part:
Murmuring he lifts his eyes, and thinks it hard,
That generous actions meet a base reward.

From The Hermit.

EPIGRAM.

The greatest gifts that Nature does bestow,
Can't unassisted to perfection grow:
A scanty fortune clips the wings of Fame,
And checks the progress of a rising name:
Each dastard virtue drags a captive's chain,
And moves but slowly, for it moves with pain:
Domestic cares sit hard upon the mind,
And cramp those thoughts which should be unconfined:
The cries of Poverty alarm the soul,
Abate its vigour, its designs control:
The stings of Want inflict the wounds of Death,
And motion always ceases with the breath.
The love of friends is found a languid fire,
That glares but faintly, and will soon expire;
Weak is its force, nor can its warmth be great,
A feeble light begets a feeble heat.
Wealth is the fuel that must feed the flame,
It dies in rags, and scarce deserves a name.

This talented writer was born at Shelton, near Newcastle, in 1683, and was educated at Cambridge; but as he was of non-juring principles, he refused the oaths that were necessary to qualify him for a literary degree, as well as public employment. On this account, the earlier part of his life was spent under considerable deprivations, until he was kindly relieved by Pope, who introduced him to Secretary Craggs, and afterwards to Sir William Trumball, by both of whom he was employed in a literary capacity. Fenton was likewise a coadjutor of Pope in translating Homer's Odyssey, and his share of that performance was the first, the fourth, the nineteenth, and the twentieth books. He died at Easthamstead, the seat of Lady Trumball, in Berkshire, in 1730.

IMPOTENCE OF HUMAN WISDOM.

The spark of pure ethereal light
That actuates this fleeting frame,
Darts through the cloud of flesh a sickly flame,
And seems a glow-worm in a winter night.
But man would yet look wondrous wise,
And equal chains of thought devise;
Intends his mind on mighty schemes,
Refutes, defines, confirms, declaims;
And diagrams he draws, t' explain
The learn'd chimeras of his brain;
And, with imaginary wisdom proud,
Thinks on the goddess while he clips the cloud.

Through error's mazy grove, with fruitless toil,
Perplex'd with puzzling doubts we roam;
False images our sight beguile,
But still we stumble through the gloom,
And science seek, which still deludes the mind.
Yet, more enamour'd with the race,
With disproportion'd speed we urge the chase:
In vain! the various prey no bounds restrain;
Fleeting it only leaves, t' increase our pain,
A cold unsatisfying scent behind.

Yet, gracious God! presumptuous man
With random guesses makes pretence
To sound thy searchless providence
From which he first began:
Like hooded hawks we blindly tower,
And circumscribe, with fancied laws, thy power.

Thy will the rolling orbs obey,
The moon, presiding o'er the sea,
Governs the waves with equal sway:
But man, perverse and lawless still,
Boldly runs counter to thy will;
Thy patient thunder he defies;
Lays down false principles, and moves
By what his vicious choice approves;
And, when he 's vainly wicked, thinks he 's wise.

Return, return, too long misled!
With filial fear adore thy God:
Ere the vast deep of heaven was spread,
Or body first in space abode,
Glories ineffable adorn'd his head.
Unnumber'd seraphs round the burning throne,
Sung to th' incomprehensible Three-One:
Yet then his clemency did please
With lower forms t' augment his train,
And made thee, wretched creature, Man,
Probationer of happiness

EDUCATION.

Nature permits her various gifts to fall
On various climes, nor smiles alike on all:
The Latian vales eternal verdure wear,
And flowers spontaneous crown the smiling year;
But who manures a wild Norwegian hill,
To raise the jasmine, or the coy jonquil?
Who finds the peach among the savage sloes,
Or in bleak Scythia seeks the blushing rose?
Here golden grain waves o'er the teeming fields,
And there the vine her racy purple yields.
High on the cliffs the British oak ascends,
Proud to survey the seas her power defends;
Her sovereign title to the flag she proves,
Scornful of softer India's spicy groves.
These instances, which true in fact we find,
Apply we to the culture of the mind.
This soil, in early youth improved with care,
The seeds of gentle science best will bear;
That, with more particles of flame inspired,
With glittering arms and thirst of fame is fired;

Nothing of greatness in a third will grow,
But, barren as it is, 'twill bear a beau.
If these from Nature's genial bent depart,
In life's dull farce to play a borrow'd part;
Should the sage dress, and flutter in the Mall,
Or leave his problems for a birth-night ball;
Should the rough homicide unsheath his pen,
And in heroics only murder men;
Should the soft fop forsake the lady's charms,
To face the foe with inoffensive arms;
Each would variety of acts afford,
Fit for some new Cervantes to record.

From the Epistle to Mr. Lambard.

ON THE FIRST FIT OF THE GOUT.

Welcome, thou friendly earnest of fourscore,
Promise of wealth, that hast alone the power
T' attend the rich, unenvied by the poor.
Thou that dost Æsculapius deride,
And o'er his gallipots in triumph ride;
Thou that art used t' attend the royal throne,
And under-prop the head that bears the crown;
Thou that dost oft in privy council wait,
And guard from drowsy sleep the eyes of state;
Thou that upon the bench art mounted high,
And warn'st the judges how they tread awry;
Thou that dost oft from pamper'd prelate's toe
Emphatically urge the pains below;
Thou that art ever half the city's grace,
And add'st to solemn noddles solemn pace;
Thou that art used to sit on ladies' knee,
To feed on jellies, and to drink cold tea;
Thou that art ne'er from velvet slipper free;
Whence comes this unsought honour unto me?
Whence does this mighty condescension flow?
To visit my poor tabernacle, O—!
As Jove vouchsafed on Ida's top, 'tis said,
At poor Philemon's cot to take a bed;
Pleased with the poor but hospitable feast,
Jove bid him ask, and granted his request;
So do thou grant (for thou 'rt of race divine,
Begot on Venus by the God of Wine)
My humble suit!—And either give me store
To entertain thee, or ne'er see me more.



WATTS.

Although the poetry of this amiable and talented author has been extravagantly over-rated by a certain class of religionists, he would probably have been excluded from the catalogue of genuine English poets, had it not been for the friendly interposition of Johnson, who vindicated his real excellence to the world, and showed that he was something more than the mere laureate of a sect. Isaac Watts was born at Southampton, in 1674, and was the eldest of nine children. We are told that he was distinguished by a love of books from his infancy, and that he began to learn Latin at four years old. His proficiency at school was so remarkable, that a subscription was proposed for his support at the University; but he conscientiously sacrificed this tempting opportunity by proclaiming his adherence to the principles of the Dissenters. Accordingly, in 1690, he repaired to the academy kept by Mr. Rowe, and there distinguished himself beyond all his class-fellows, by his exercises and acquirements. His poetical productions were numerous, as he continued to write verses from the age of fifteen to fifty; and they consist chiefly of a Paraphrase of the Psalms of David, a large collection of Hymns, many lyrics, and a collection of Divine Songs for Infants—a species of writing of which he may be justly considered the founder. After a long life of eminent usefulness as a clergyman, and the establishment of a high literary reputation by his ethical and metaphysical writings, in consequence of which he received from the colleges of Glasgow and Aberdeen the degree of Doctor of Divinity, he entered into his rest on the 25th of November, 1743.

Fly to the polar world, my song,
And mourn the pilgrims there (a wretched throng!)
Seized and bound with rigid chains,
A troop of statues on the Russian plains,
And life stands frozen in the purple veins.
Atheist, forbear; no more blaspheme:
God has a thousand terrors in his name,
A thousand armies at command,
Waiting the signal of his hand,
And magazines of frost, and magazines of flame.
Dress thee in steel to meet his wrath;
His sharp artillery from the north
Shall pierce thee to the soul, and shake thy mortal frame.
Sublime on Winter's rugged wings
He rides in arms along the sky.
And scatters fate on swains and kings;
And flocks, and herds, and nations, die;
While impious lips, profanely bold,
Grow pale; and, quivering at his dreadful cold,
Give their own blasphemies the lie.



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DIVINE JUDGMENTS.

Not from the dust my sorrows spring,
Nor drop my comforts from the lower skies!
Let all the baneful planets shed
Their mingled curses on my head,
How vain their curses, if th' Eternal King
Look through the clouds, and bless me with his eyes!
Creatures with all their boasted sway
Are but his slaves, and must obey;
They wait their orders from above,
And execute his word, the vengeance, or the love.

'Tis by a warrant from his hand
The gentler gales are bound to sleep:
The north wind blusters, and assumes command
Over the desert and the deep;
Old Boreas with his freezing powers
Turns the earth iron, makes the ocean glass,
Arrests the dancing rivulets as they pass,
And chains them moveless to their shores;
The grazing ox lows to the gelid skies,
Walks o'er the marble meads with withering eyes,
Walks o'er the solid lakes, snuffs up the wind, and dies.

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And flocks, and herds, and nations, die;
While impious lips, profanely bold,
Grow pale; and, quivering at his dreadful cold,
Give their own blasphemies the lie.

The mischiefs that infest the earth,
When the hot dog-star fires the realms on high,
Drought and disease, and cruel dearth,
Are but the flashes of a wrathful eye
From the incensed Divinity.
In vain our parching palates thirst,
For vital food in vain we cry,
And pant for vital breath ;
The verdant fields are burnt to dust,
The sun has drunk the channels dry,
And all the air is death.
Ye scourges of our maker's rod,
'Tis at his dread command, at his imperial nod,
You deal your various plagues abroad.

Hail, whirlwinds, hurricanes, and floods,
That all the leafy standards strip,
And bear down with a mighty sweep
The riches of the fields, and honours of the woods ;
Storms, that ravage o'er the deep,
And bury millions in the waves ;
Earthquakes, that in midnight sleep
Turn cities into heaps, and make our beds our graves ;
While you dispense your mortal harms,
'Tis the Creator's voice that sounds you loud alarms,
When guilt with louder cries provokes a God to arms.

O for a message from above
To bear my spirits up!
Some pledge of my Creator's love
To calm my terrors, and support my hope!
Let waves and thunders mix and roar,
Be thou my God, and the whole world is mine :
While thou art Sovereign, I'm secure ;
I shall be rich till thou art poor ;
For all I fear, and all I wish, heaven, earth, and hell, are thine.

SEEKING A DIVINE CALM IN A RESTLESS WORLD.

Eternal mind, who rulest the fates
Of dying realms, and rising states,
With one unchanged decree ;

While we admire thy vast affairs,
Say, can our little trifling cares
Afford a smile to thee?

Thou scatterest honours, crowns, and gold:
We fly to seize, and fight to hold
The bubbles and the ore:
So emmets struggle for a grain;
So boys their petty wars maintain
For shells upon the shore.

Here a vain man his sceptre breaks,
The next a broken sceptre takes,
And warriors win and lose;
This rolling world will never stand,
Plunder'd and snatch'd from hand to hand,
As power decays or grows.

Earth 's but an atom: greedy swords
Carve it among a thousand lords,
And yet they can't agree:
Let greedy swords still fight and slay,
I can be poor; but, Lord, I pray
To sit and smile with thee.

LAUNCHING INTO ETERNITY.

It was a brave attempt! adventurous he,
Who in the first ship broke the unknown sea:
And, leaving his dear native shores behind,
Trusted his life to the licentious wind.
I see the surging brine: the tempest raves:
He on a pine-plank rides across the waves,
Exulting on the edge of thousand gaping graves:
He steers the winged boat, and shifts the sails,
Conquers the flood, and manages the gales.

Such is the soul that leaves this mortal land
Fearless when the great Master gives command.
Death is the storm: she smiles to hear it roar,
And bids the tempest waft her from the shore:
Then with a skilful helm she sweeps the seas,
And manages the raging storm with ease;
(Her faith can govern death) she spreads her wings
Wide to the wind, and as she sails she sings,
And loses by degrees the sight of mortal things.

As the shores lessen, so her joys arise,
The waves roll gentler, and the tempest dies;
Now vast eternity fills all her sight,
She floats on the broad deep with infinite delight,
The seas for ever calm, the skies for ever bright.

FREE PHILOSOPHY.

Custom, that tyranness of fools,
That leads the learned round the schools,
In magic chains of forms and rules!
My genius storms her throne:
No more, ye slaves, with awe profound
Beat the dull track, nor dance the round;
Loose hands, and quit th' enchanted ground:
Knowledge invites us each alone.

I hate these shackles of the mind
Forged by the haughty wise;
Souls were not born to be confined,
And led, like Samson, blind and bound;
But when his native strength he found
He well avenged his eyes.
I love thy gentle influence, Rowe;
Thy gentle influence, like the sun,
Only dissolves the frozen snow,
Then bids our thoughts like rivers flow,
And choose the channels where they run.

Thoughts should be free as fire or wind;
The pinions of a single mind
Will through all nature fly:
But who can drag up to the poles
Long fetter'd ranks of leaden souls?
A genius which no chain controls
Roves with delight, or deep, or high:
Swift I survey the globe around,
Dive to the centre through the solid ground,
Or travel o'er the sky.

TO THE REV. JOHN HOWE.

Great man, permit the Muse to climb
And seat her at thy feet,

Bid her attempt a thought sublime,
And consecrate her wit.
I feel, I feel th' attractive force
Of thy superior soul:
My chariot flies her upward course,
The wheels divinely roll.
Now let me chide the mean affairs
And mighty toil of men:
How they grow grey in trifling cares,
Or waste the motions of the spheres
Upon delights as vain!

A puff of honour fills the mind,
And yellow dust is solid good;
Thus, like the ass of savage kind,
We snuff the breezes of the wind,
Or steal the serpent's food.
Could all the choirs
That charm the poles
But strike one doleful sound,
'Twould be employ'd to mourn our souls,
Souls that were framed of sprightly fires
In floods of folly drown'd.
Souls made of glory seek a brutal joy;
How they disclaim their heavenly birth,
Melt their bright substance down with drossy earth,
And hate to be refined from that impure alloy.

Oft has thy genius roused us hence
With elevated song,
Bid us renounce this world of sense,
Bid us divide th' immortal prize
With the seraphic throng:
"Knowledge and love make spirits blest,
Knowledge their food, and love their rest;"
But flesh, th' unmanageable beast,
Resists the pity of thine eyes,
And music of thy tongue.
Then let the worms of grovelling mind
Round the short joys of earthly kind
In restless windings roam;
Howe hath an ample orb of soul,
Where shining worlds of knowledge roll,
Where love, the centre and the pole,
Completes the heaven at home.

THIS poet was born at Marlborough, on the 29th of July, 1677. His favourite studies were poetry and music, which he succeeded in combining, by the production of several Cantatas that were greatly admired by the public. Occasionally, also, he wrote in prose, of which his contributions to the Spectator, Tatler, and Guardian, secured him the esteem of his talented contemporaries. More fortunate, also, than the generality of the poets of his day, he, in 1717, received from Lord Chancellor Cowper the appointment of Secretary to the Commissions of the Peace, an office that secured him affluence for the remainder of his life, which, unfortunately, however, terminated only three years after. As a poet, Hughes is chiefly known by his tragedy of The Siege of Damascus.

TO A BEAUTIFUL LADY,

PLAYING ON THE ORGAN.

When famed Cecilia on the organ play'd,
  And fill'd with moving sounds the tuneful frame,
Drawn by the charm, to hear the sacred maid,
  From heaven, 'tis said, a listening angel came.
Thus ancient legends would our faith abuse;
  In vain——for were the bold tradition true,
While your harmonious touch that charm renews,
  Again the seraph would appear to you.
O happy fair! in whom with purest light,
  Virtue's united beams with beauty shine!
Should heavenly guests descend to bless our sight,
  What form more lovely could they wear than thine?

ON DIVINE POETRY.

In Nature's golden age, when new-born day
Array'd the skies, and earth was green and gay;
When God, with pleasure, all his works survey'd,
And virgin innocence before him play'd;
In that illustrious morn, that lovely spring,
The Muse, by heaven inspired, began to sing.
Descending angels, in harmonious lays,
Taught the first happy pair their Maker's praise.
Such was the sacred art—We now deplore
The Muse's loss, since Eden is no more.
When Vice from hell rear'd up its hydra head,
Th' affrighted maid, with chaste Astræa, fled,
And sought protection in her native sky;
In vain the heathen Nine her absence would supply.

Yet to some few, whose dazzling virtues shone
In ages past, her heavenly charms were known.
Hence learn'd the bard, in lofty strains to tell
How patient Virtue triumph'd over hell;
And hence the chief, who led the chosen race
Through parting seas, derived his songs of praise:
She gave the rapturous ode, whose ardent lay
Sings female force, and vanquish'd Sisera;
She tuned to pious notes the Psalmist's lyre,
And fill'd Isaiah's breast with more than Pindar's fire!

AN IMAGE OF PLEASURE,

IN IMITATION OF AN ODE IN CASIMIRE.

Solace of life, my sweet companion lyre!
On this fair poplar bough I 'll hang thee high,
While the gay fields all soft delights inspire,
And not one cloud deforms the smiling sky.

While whispering gales, that court the leaves and flowers,
Play through thy strings, and gently make them sound,
Luxurious I 'll dissolve the flowing hours
In balmy slumbers on the carpet ground.

But see—what sudden gloom obscures the air!
What falling showers impetuous change the day!
Let 's rise, my lyre—Ah Pleasure false as fair!
How faithless are thy charms, how short thy stay!

WRITTEN IN A LADY'S PRAYER BOOK.

So fair a form, with such devotion join'd!
A virgin body, and a spotless mind!
Pleased with her prayers, while heaven propitious sees
The lovely votaress on her bended knees:

Sure it must think some angel lost its way—
And happening on our wretched earth to stray,
Tired with our follies, fain would take its flight,
And begs to be restored to those blest realms of light.

ODE ON THE SPRING.

FOR THE MONTH OF MAY.

Wanton Zephyr, come away!
On this sweet, this silent grove,
Sacred to the Muse and Love,
In gentle whisper'd murmurs play!
Come, let thy soft, thy balmy breeze
Diffuse thy vernal sweets around
From sprouting flowers, and blossom'd trees;
While hills and echoing vales resound
With notes, which wing'd musicians sing
In honour to the bloom of spring.

Lovely season of desire!
Nature smiles with joy to see
The amorous months led on by thee,
That kindly wake her genial fire.
The brightest object in the skies,
The fairest lights that shine below,
The sun, and Mira's charming eyes,
At thy return more charming grow:
With double glory they appear,
To warm and grace the infant year.

SONG.

Fame of Dorinda's conquest, brought
The God of Love her charms to view;
To wound th' unwary maid he thought,
But soon became her conquest too.

He dropp'd half drawn his feeble bow,
He look'd, he raved, and sighing pined;
And wish'd in vain he had been now,
As painters falsely draw him, blind.

Disarm'd, he to his mother flies;
Help, Venus, help thy wretched son!
Who now will pay us sacrifice?
For Love himself's, alas! undone.

To Cupid now no lover's prayer
Shall be address'd in suppliant sighs;
My darts are gone, but oh! beware,
Fond mortals, of Dorinda's eyes!

This terrible satirist, who proclaimed war and defiance to all mankind, was born at Dublin in 1667, although by his own account his birth-place was Leicester; but he proclaimed himself an Englishman or Irishman according to the convenience of the moment. He was educated at the University of Dublin, and was at first so inattentive to his studies, that when the time arrived for claiming a Bachelorship of Arts, he was found so unqualified, that the degree was conferred on him by special favour, rather than on account of merit. This degradation stung him so deeply, that he resolved to repair his deficiencies by studying eight hours a day for seven years—a resolution to which he adhered, and by which he laid the foundation of his future eminence. At the age of twenty-one, he obtained the patronage of Sir William Temple, who introduced him to King William; and the latter, whose ideas were wholly military, was so well pleased with Swift, that he would have made him a captain of horse, an offer which the young aspirant to political power thought proper to decline. Finding that the patronage of Temple was not likely to procure solid benefit, Swift resolved to enter into the church: he accordingly took orders, and had many promises of advancement; but after repeated disappointments he could obtain nothing but the livings of Laracor and Rathbeggin, in the diocese of Meath. He now gave full vent to his satirical spirit by publishing his Tale of a Tub, in 1704, a work which, on being shown to the Queen, excluded the author from all hope of an English bishopric; and from that period until 1710, he addressed the public with occasional pamphlets and treatises, suggested by passing events. After this, his career was a fierce scramble for political influence and preferment until 1714, when, finding himself worsted in the struggle, and deprived of all hope by the death of Queen Anne, he indignantly withdrew to Ireland, to settle in his Deanery of St. Patrick, which he had obtained the previous year. Thus he was doomed, after all his labours and prospects, to content himself with what he considered a very paltry remuneration, and to spend the rest of his life in a country which he hated, and among a people whom he despised. His pen, however, which was actively employed, afforded him consolation, and he wielded it with not the less vigour and severity from the recollection of past disappointments. This continued till his death in 1744, when he expired "a driveller and a show." It could scarcely be expected that an irreligious divine, heartless politician, and selfish lover, could possess the elements of true poetry, and therefore Swift might be considered a rhymer rather than a poet. His verse, like his prose, is terse and vigorous, but it never for a moment makes the slightest approach to the sublime or the tender; and even when he endeavours in his addresses to Vanessa or Stella to use the language of love, the effort is so overstrained and artificial, that it moves nothing but contempt. Indeed, he has written nothing in verse, which he could not have expressed as well, or perhaps much better, in prose.

TO THE EARL OF PETERBOROUGH:

WHO COMMANDED THE BRITISH FORCES IN SPAIN.

Mordanto fills the trump of fame,
The Christian worlds his deeds proclaim,
And prints are crowded with his name.

In journeys he outrides the post,
Sits up till midnight with his host,
Talks politics, and gives the toast;

Knows every prince in Europe's face,
Flies like a squib from place to place,
And travels not, but runs a race.

From Paris gazette à-la-maine,
This day arrived, without his train,
Mordanto in a week from Spain.

A messenger comes all a-reek,
Mordanto at Madrid to seek;
He left the town above a week.

Next day the post-boy winds his horn,
And rides through Dover in the morn:
Mordanto 's landed from Leghorn.

Mordanto gallops on alone;
The roads are with his followers strown;
This breaks a girth, and that a bone.

His body active as his mind,
Returning sound in limb and wind,
Except some leather lost behind.

A skeleton in outward figure,
His meagre corpse, though full of vigour,
Would halt behind him were it bigger.

So wonderful his expedition,
When you have not the least suspicion,
He 's with you like an apparition:

Shines in all climates like a star;
In senates bold, and fierce in war;
A land commander, and a tar:

Heroic actions early bred in,
Ne'er to be match'd in modern reading,
But by his name-sake Charles of Sweden.

EPIGRAM.

As Thomas was cudgell'd one day by his wife,
He took to the street, and fled for his life:
Tom's three dearest friends came by in the squabble,
And saved him at once from the shrew and the rabble;
Then ventured to give him some sober advice—
But Tom is a person of honour so nice,

Too wise to take counsel, too proud to take warning,
That he sent to all three a challenge next morning:
Three duels he fought, thrice ventured his life;
Went home—and was cudgell'd again by his wife.

ON A CURATE'S COMPLAINT OF HARD DUTY.

I march'd three miles through scorching sand,
With zeal in heart, and notes in hand;
I rode four more to Great St. Mary,
Using four legs, when two were weary:
To three fair virgins I did tie men,
In the close bands of pleasing Hymen;
I dipp'd two babes in holy water,
And purified their mother after.
Within an hour and eke a half,
I preach'd three congregations deaf;
Where thundering out, with lungs long-winded,
I chopp'd so fast, that few there minded.
My emblem, the laborious sun,
Saw all these mighty labours done
Before one race of his was run.
All this perform'd by Robert Hewit:
What mortal else could e'er go through it?

THE PROGRESS OF POETRY.

The farmer's goose, who in the stubble
Has fed without restraint or trouble,
Grown fat with corn, and sitting still,
Can scarce get o'er the barn-door sill;
And hardly waddles forth to cool
Her belly in the neighbouring pool;
Nor loudly cackles at the door;
For cackling shows the goose is poor.
But, when she must be turn'd to graze,
And round the barren common strays,
Hard exercise and harder fare
Soon make my dame grow lank and spare:
Her body light, she tries her wings,
And scorns the ground, and upward springs;
While all the parish, as she flies,
Hears sounds harmonious from the skies.
Such is the poet fresh in pay
(The third night's profits of his play);

His morning draughts till noon can swill
Among his brethren of the quill:
With good roast beef his belly full,
Grown lazy, foggy, fat, and dull,
Deep sunk in plenty and delight,
What poet e'er could take his flight?
Or, stuff'd with phlegm up to the throat,
What poet e'er could sing a note?
Nor Pegasus could bear the load
Along the high celestial road;
The steed, oppress'd, would break his girth,
To raise the lumber from the earth.
  But view him in another scene,
When all his drink is Hippocrene,
His money spent, his patrons fail,
His credit out for cheese and ale;
His two-years' coat so smooth and bare,
Through every thread it lets in air;
With hungry meals his body pined,
His guts and belly full of wind;
And, like a jockey for a race,
His flesh brought down to flying case:
Now his exalted spirit loaths
Incumbrances of food and clothes;
And up he rises, like a vapour,
Supported high on wings of paper;
He singing flies, and flying sings,
While from below all Grub-street rings.

RIDDLE: On the Gallows.

There is a gate, we know full well,
That stands 'twixt heaven, and earth, and hell,
Where many for a passage venture,
Yet very few are fond to enter;
Although 'tis open night and day,
They for that reason shun this way:
Both dukes and lords abhor its wood,
They can't come near it for their blood.
What other way they take to go,
Another time I 'll let you know.
Yet commoners with greatest ease
Can find an entrance when they please.
The poorest hither march in state
(Or they can never pass the gate),

Like Roman generals triumphant,
And then they take a turn and jump on't.
If gravest parsons here advance,
They cannot pass before they dance;
There 's not a soul that does resort here,
But strips himself to pay the porter.

ON WOOD, THE IRONMONGER.

Salmoneus, as the Grecian tale is,
Was a mad coppersmith of Elis;
Up at his forge by morning peep,
No creature in the lane could sleep;
Among a crew of roystering fellows
Would sit whole evenings at the alehouse:
His wife and children wanted bread,
While he went always drunk to bed.
This vapouring scab must needs devise
To ape the thunder of the skies:
With *brass* two fiery steeds he shod,
To make a clattering as they trod.
Of polish'd *brass* his flaming car
Like lightning dazzled from afar;
And up he mounts into the box,
And he must thunder, with a pox.
Then furious he begins his march
Drives rattling o'er a brazen arch;
With squibs and crackers arm'd, to throw
Among the trembling crowd below.
All ran to prayers, both priests and laity,
To pacify this angry deity:
When Jove, in pity to the town,
With real thunder knock'd him down.
Then what a huge delight were all in,
To see the wicked varlet sprawling;
They search'd his pockets on the place,
And found his copper all was base;
They laugh'd at such an Irish blunder,
To take the noise of brass for thunder.
The moral of this tale is proper,
Applied to Wood's adulter'd copper;
Which, as he scatter'd, we, like dolts,
Mistook at first for thunder-bolts;
Before the Drapier shot a letter
(Nor Jove himself could do it better),
Which, lighting on th' impostor's crown,
Like real thunder knock'd him down.

*

THE DOG AND THE THIEF.

Quoth the thief to the dog, Let me into your door,
And I 'll give you these delicate bits.
Quoth the dog, I shall then be more villain than you are,
And besides must be out of my wits.

Your delicate bits will not serve me a meal,
But my master each day gives me bread;
You 'll fly, when you get what you came here to steal,
And I must be hang'd in your stead.

The stock-jobber thus from 'Change-alley goes down,
And tips you the freeman a wink;
Let me have but your vote to serve for the town,
And here is a guinea to drink.

Says the freeman, Your guinea to-night would be spent!
Your offers of bribery cease:
I 'll vote for my landlord, to whom I pay rent,
Or else I may forfeit my lease.

From London they come, silly people to chouse,
Their lands and their faces unknown:
Who 'd vote a rogue into the Parliament house,
That would turn a man out of his own?



THOMAS TICKELL was born at Bridekirk, in Cumberland, in 1686. He was a student, and afterwards became a fellow, of Queen's College, Oxford, but he vacated his fellowship in 1726, by marrying at Dublin. The literary career of Tickell was chiefly of a political character, and he espoused the cause of his party with such ardour, that he obtained from Dean Swift the nick-name of Whiggissimus. What was of greater importance to him, was his obtaining the friendship of Addison, who recommended his poetry to public notice; and in 1717, when his patron was made Secretary of State, he appointed Tickell under-secretary. This friendship continued till the death of Addison, who solemnly commended him, on his death-bed, to the patronage of Craggs, and gave him the charge of publishing his works; and Tickell prefaced the collection with an Elegy on its author, which forms one of the most affecting funeral poems in the English language. In 1725, Tickell was made Secretary to the Lords Justices of Ireland, and in this office he continued till his death, which occurred April 23, 1740.

FROM AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF ADDISON.

In what new region, to the just assign'd,
What new employments please th' unbodied mind;
A winged Virtue, through th' ethereal sky,
From world to world unwearied does he fly?
Or curious trace the long laborious maze
Of [illegible] angels gaze?

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From world to world unwearied does he fly?
Or curious trace the long laborious maze
Of heaven's decrees, where wondering angels gaze?
Does he delight to hear bold seraphs tell
How Michael battled, and the dragon fell;
Or, mix'd with milder cherubim, to glow
In hymns of love, not ill essay'd below?
Or dost thou warn poor mortals left behind,
A task well suited to thy gentle mind?
Oh! if sometimes thy spotless form descend,
To me, thy aid, thou guardian genius, lend!
When rage misguides me, or when fear alarms,
When pain distresses, or when pleasure charms,
In silent whisperings purer thoughts impart,
And turn from ill a frail and feeble heart;
Lead through the paths thy virtue trod before,
Till bliss shall join, nor death can part us more.

That awful form, which, so the heavens decree,
Must still be loved and still deplored by me;
In nightly visions seldom fails to rise,
Or, roused by Fancy, meets my waking eyes.
If business calls, or crowded courts invite,
Th' unblemish'd statesman seems to strike my sight;
If in the stage I seek to soothe my care,
I meet his soul which breathes in Cato there;
If pensive to the rural shades I rove,
His shape o'ertakes me in the lonely grove;

'Twas there of just and good he reason'd strong,
Clear'd some great truth, or raised some serious song:
There patient show'd us the wise course to steer,
A candid censor, and a friend severe;
There taught us how to live; and (oh! too high
The price for knowledge) taught us how to die.

COLIN AND LUCY:

A BALLAD.

Of Leinster, famed for maidens fair,
Bright Lucy was the grace;
Nor e'er did Liffy's limpid stream
Reflect so sweet a face:
Till luckless love, and pining care,
Impair'd her rosy hue,
Her coral lips, and damask cheeks,
And eyes of glossy blue.

Oh! have you seen a lily pale,
When beating rains descend?
So droop'd the slow-consuming maid,
Her life now near its end.
By Lucy warn'd, of flattering swains
Take heed, ye easy fair:
Of vengeance due to broken vows,
Ye perjured swains, beware.

Three times, all in the dead of night,
A bell was heard to ring;
And shrieking at the window thrice,
The raven flapp'd his wing.
Too well the love-lorn maiden knew
The solemn boding sound:
And thus, in dying words, bespoke
The virgins weeping round:

"I hear a voice, you cannot hear,
Which says, I must not stay;
I see a hand, you cannot see,
Which beckons me away.
By a false heart, and broken vows,
In early youth I die:

Was I to blame, because his bride
Was thrice as rich as I?

"Ah, Colin! give not her thy vows,
Vows due to me alone:
Nor thou, fond maid, receive his kiss,
Nor think him all thy own.
To-morrow, in the church to wed,
Impatient, both prepare!
But know, fond maid, and know, false man,
That Lucy will be there!

"Then bear my corse, my comrades, bear,
This bridegroom blithe to meet,
He in his wedding trim so gay,
I in my winding-sheet."
She spoke, she died, her corse was borne,
The bridegroom blithe to meet,
He in his wedding trim so gay,
She in her winding-sheet.

Then what were perjured Colin's thoughts?
How were these nuptials kept?
The bridesmen flock'd round Lucy dead,
And all the village wept.
Confusion, shame, remorse, despair,
At once his bosom swell:
The damps of death bedew'd his brow,
He shook, he groan'd, he fell.

From the vain bride, ah, bride no more!
The varying crimson fled,
When, stretch'd before her rival's corse,
She saw her husband dead.
Then to his Lucy's new-made grave,
Convey'd by trembling swains,
One mould with her, beneath one sod,
For ever he remains.

Oft at this grave, the constant hind
And plighted maid are seen;
With garlands gay, and true-love knots,
They deck the sacred green:
But, swain forsworn, whoe'er thou art,
This hallow'd spot forbear;
Remember Colin's dreadful fate,
And fear to meet him there.

THE CHANGELING.

By magic fenced, by spells encompass'd round,
No mortal touch'd this interdicted ground;
No mortal enter'd, those alone who came
Stolen from the couch of some terrestrial dame:
For oft of babes they robb'd the matron's bed,
And left some sickly changeling in their stead.
It chanced a youth of Albion's royal blood
Was foster'd here, the wonder of the wood.
Milkah for wiles above her peers renown'd,
Deep-skill'd in charms and many a mystic sound,
As through the regal dome she sought for prey,
Observed the infant Albion, where he lay
In mantles broider'd o'er with gorgeous pride,
And stole him from the sleeping mother's side.
Who now but Milkah triumphs in her mind!
Ah, wretched nymph, to future evils blind!
The time shall come when thou shalt dearly pay
The theft, hard-hearted! of that guilty day:
Thou in thy turn shalt like the queen repine,
And all her sorrows doubled shall be thine:
He who adorns thy house, the lovely boy
Who now adorns it, shall at length destroy.
Two hundred moons in their pale course had seen
The gay-robed fairies glimmer on the green,
And Albion now had reach'd in youthful prime
To nineteen years, as mortals measure time.
Flush'd with resistless charms he fired to love
Each nymph and little Dryad of the grove;
For skilful Milkah spared not to employ
Her utmost art to rear the princely boy;
Each supple limb she swath'd, and tender bone,
And to the Elfin standard kept him down;
She robb'd dwarf-elders of their fragrant fruit,
And fed him early with the daisy's root,
Whence through his veins the powerful juices ran,
And form'd in beauteous miniature the man.
Yet still, two inches taller than the rest,
His lofty port his human birth confest!
A foot in height, how stately did he show!
How look superior on the crowd below!
What knight like him could toss the rushy lance?
Who move so graceful in the mazy dance?
A shape so nice, or features half so fair,
What elf could boast? or such a flow of hair?

Bright Kenna saw, a princess born to reign,
And felt the charmer burn in every vein.
She, heiress to this empire's potent lord,
Praised like the stars, and next the moon adored.
She, whom at distance thrones and princedoms view'd,
To whom proud Oriel and Azuriel sued,
In her high palace languish'd, void of joy,
And pined in secret for a mortal boy.

From Kensington Garden.

IN PRAISE OF THE HORN BOOK.

But how shall I thy endless virtues tell,
In which thou dost all other books excel?
No greasy thumbs thy spotless leaf can soil,
Nor crooked dogs'-ears thy smooth corners spoil;
In idle pages no errata stand,
To tell the blunders of the printer's hand:
No fulsome dedication here is writ,
Nor flattering verse, to praise the author's wit:
The margin, with no tedious notes is vex'd,
Nor various reading to confound the text:
All parties in thy literal sense agree,
Thou perfect centre of concordancy!
Search we the records of an ancient date,
Or read what modern histories relate,
They all proclaim what wonders have been done
By the plain letters taken as they run.

Thy heavenly notes, like angels' music, cheer
Departing souls, and soothe the dying ear.
An aged peasant, on his latest bed,
Wish'd for a friend some godly book to read:
The pious grandson thy known handle takes,
And (eyes lift up) this savoury lecture makes:
Great A, he gravely read; the important sound
The empty walls and hollow roof rebound:
The expiring ancient rear'd his drooping head,
And thank'd his stars that Hodge had learn'd to read.
Great B, the younker bawls! O heavenly breath!
What ghostly comforts in the hour of death!
What hopes I feel! Great C, pronounced the boy;
The grandsire dies with ecstacy of joy.

This illustrious writer, who may be considered the Father of our national periodical literature, was born at Milston, in Wiltshire, on the 1st of May, 1672. He received his education at the Chartreux School, where he contracted that friendship for Sir Richard Steele, which united them through life in their literary exertions. In 1687, Addison was entered into Queen's College, Oxford, where he distinguished himself by his critical taste, and the excellence of his Latin verses. His original design had been to devote himself to the church; but from this he was diverted by the advice of his friends, and he resolved to become a courtier—in consequence of which he commenced with poetical laudations upon King William, and the Peace of Ryswick. But a more profitable theme awaited him: this was the great victory of Blenheim, which required an adequate poet to celebrate it; and Addison, having undertaken the task, produced The Campaign for which he was rewarded with the office of Commissioner of Appeals. After this his promotion was so remarkable, that it must have astonished himself as well as the world; for he was first appointed Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; afterwards Secretary to the Regency, upon the death of Queen Anne; and, finally, in 1717, the climax was finished, by his being made Secretary of State. But in these changes, it would appear as if, to use Malvolio's expression, greatness had been thrust upon him, for his gentle spirit and invincible bashfulness completely unfitted him for the management of a senate, so that he solicited his dismission, and retired upon a pension of 1,500*l.* a year. After this, he devoted himself to literature, and the society of his literary friends, until his death, which occurred on the 17th of June, 1719. His last moments were in beautiful harmony with the pure and religious spirit of his writings, for he was then chiefly solicitous to show how a Christian can die.

As a poet, Addison's Cato, which is a dramatic poem rather than a play, is too well known to require further notice. In the structure of his versification, he commenced with imitating Dryden, and ended by selecting Pope for his model, but he never could attain the strength of the former, nor the sweetness of the latter. It was by his prose writings, and especially his articles in the Spectator, that he influenced the opinions of his own day, and descended to posterity; and a single chapter of his Roger de Coverley is worth all his English and Latin poetry. His verses, indeed, instead of being the spontaneous outpourings of a heart that "voluntary moved harmonious numbers," seem rather to have been constructed in a style, and upon subjects, that would tend to his own advancement—and truly they had their reward!

AN ODE.

I.

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great original proclaim.
The unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display;
And publishes, to every land,
The work of an Almighty hand.

II.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale;
And nightly, to the listening earth,
Repeats the story of her birth:
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets, in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

III.

What though, in solemn silence, all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball;
What though, no real voice, nor sound,
Amidst their radiant orbs be found:
In Reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice;
For ever singing as they shine,
The hand that made us is Divine.



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THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM.

But now the trumpet terrible from far
In shriller clangours animates the war;
Confederate drums in fuller concert beat,
And echoing hills the loud alarm repeat:
Gallia's proud standards, to Bavaria's join'd,
Unfurl their gilded lilies in the wind;
The daring prince his blasted hopes renews,
And, while the thick embattled host he views
Stretcht out in deep array, and dreadful length,
His heart dilates, and glories in his strength.
The fatal day its mighty course began,
That the grieved world had long desired in vain;
States that their new captivity bemoan'd,
Armies of martyrs that in exile groan'd,
Sighs from the depth of gloomy dungeons heard,
And prayers in bitterness of soul preferr'd,
Europe's loud cries, that Providence assail'd,
And Anna's ardent vows, at length prevail'd;
The day was come when Heaven design'd to show
His care and conduct of the world below.
Behold in awful march and dread array
The long-extended squadrons shape their way!
Death, in approaching terrible, imparts
An anxious horror to the bravest hearts;
Yet do their beating breasts demand the strife,
And thirst of glory quells the love of life.
No vulgar fears can British minds control;
Heat of revenge, and noble pride of soul,
O'erlook the foe, advantaged by his post,
Lessen his numbers, and contract his host;
Though fens and floods possest the middle space,
That unprovoked they would have fear'd to pass;
Nor fens nor floods can stop Britannia's bands,
When her proud foe ranged on their borders stands.
But O, my Muse, what numbers wilt thou find
To sing the furious troops in battle join'd!
Methinks I hear the drums' tumultuous sound
The victors' shouts and dying groans confound,
The dreadful burst of cannon rend the skies,
And all the thunder of the battle rise.
'Twas then great Marlborough's mighty soul was prov'd
That, in the shock of charging hosts unmoved,
Amidst confusion, horror, and despair,
Examined all the dreadful scenes of war:

*

In peaceful thought the field of death survey'd,
To fainting squadrons sent the timely aid,
Inspired repulsed battalions to engage,
And taught the doubtful battle where to rage.
So when an angel, by divine command,
With rising tempests shakes a guilty land,
Such as of late o'er pale Britannia past,
Calm and serene he drives the furious blast;
And, pleased th' Almighty's orders to perform,
Rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm.
But see the haughty household troops advance!
The dread of Europe, and the pride of France.
The war's whole art each private soldier knows,
And with a general's love of conquest glows;
Proudly he marches on, and void of fear
Laughs at the shaking of the British spear:
Vain insolence! with native freedom brave,
The meanest Briton scorns the highest slave;
Contempt and fury fire their souls by turns,
Each nation's glory in each warrior burns;
Each fights, as in his arm th' important day
And all the fate of his great monarch lay:
A thousand glorious actions, that might claim
Triumphant laurels, and immortal fame,
Confused in crowds of glorious actions lie,
And troops of heroes undistinguish'd die.
O Dormer, how can I behold thy fate,
And not the wonders of thy youth relate!
How can I see the gay, the brave, the young,
Fall in the cloud of war, and lie unsung!
In joys of conquest he resigns his breath,
And, fill'd with England's glory, smiles in death.
The rout begins, the Gallic squadrons run,
Compell'd in crowds to meet the fate they shun;
Thousands of fiery steeds with wounds transfix'd,
Floating in gore, with their dead masters mixt,
'Midst heaps of spears and standards driven around,
Lie in the Danube's bloody whirlpools drown'd.
Troops of bold youths, born on the distant Soane,
Or sounding borders of the rapid Rhone,
Or where the Seine her flowery fields divides,
Or where the Loire through winding vineyards glides,
In heaps the rolling billows sweep away,
And into Scythian seas their bloated corps convey.
From Blenheim's towers the Gaul, with wild affright,
Beholds the various havoc of the fight;

His waving banners, that so oft had stood
Planted in fields of death and streams of blood,
So wont the guarded enemy to reach,
And rise triumphant in the fatal breach,
Or pierce the broken foe's remotest lines,
The hardy veteran with tears resigns.
Unfortunate Tallard! Oh, who can name
The pangs of rage, of sorrow, and of shame,
That with mixt tumult in thy bosom swell'd,
When first thou saw'st thy bravest troops repell'd;
Thine only son pierced with a deadly wound,
Choked in his blood, and gasping on the ground;
Thyself in bondage by the victor kept!
The chief, the father, and the captive, wept.
An English Muse is touch'd with generous woe,
And in th' unhappy man forgets the foe!
Greatly distrest; they loud complaints forbear,
Blame not the turns of fate, and chance of war;
Give thy brave foes their due, nor blush to own
The fatal field by such great leaders won;
The field whence famed Eugenio bore away
Only the second honours of the day.
With floods of gore that from the vanquish'd fell,
The marshes stagnate, and the rivers swell.
Mountains of slain lie heap'd upon the ground,
Or 'midst the roarings of the Danube drown'd;
Whole captive hosts the conqueror detains
In painful bondage, and inglorious chains.
Ev'n those who 'scape the fetters and the sword,
Nor seek the fortunes of a happier lord,
Their raging king dishonours, to complete
Marlborough's great work, and finish the defeat.
From Memminghen's high domes, and Augsburg's walls,
The distant battle drives th' insulting Gauls;
Freed by the terror of the victor's name,
The rescued States his great protection claim;
Whilst Ulme th' approach of her deliverer waits,
And longs to open her obsequious gates.

From The Campaign.

ITALY.

See how the golden groves around me smile,
That shun the coast of Britain's stormy isle;
Or, when transplanted, and preserved with care,
Curse the cold clime, and starve in northern air.
Here kindly warmth their mountain juice ferments
To nobler tastes, and more exalted scents:

Ev'n the rough rocks with tender myrtle bloom,
And trodden weeds send out a rich perfume.
Bear me, some god, to Baia's gentle seats,
Or cover me in Umbria's green retreats;
Where western gales eternally reside,
And all the seasons lavish all their pride:
Blossoms, and fruits, and flowers, together rise,
And the whole year in gay confusion lies.

Immortal glories in my mind revive,
And in my soul a thousand passions strive,
When Rome's exalted beauties I descry
Magnificent in piles of ruin lie.
An amphitheatre's amazing height
Here fills my eye with terror and delight,
That on its public shows unpeopled Rome,
And held, uncrowded, nations in its womb:
Here pillars rough with sculpture pierce the skies,
And here the proud triumphal arches rise,
Where the old Romans deathless acts display'd,
Their base degenerate progeny upbraid:
Whole rivers here forsake the fields below,
And wondering at their height through airy channels flow.

Still to new scenes my wandering Muse retires,
And the dumb show of breathing rocks admires;
Where the smooth chisel all its force has shown,
And soften'd into flesh the rugged stone.
In solemn silence, a majestic band,
Heroes, and Gods, and Roman consuls, stand,
Stern tyrants, whom their cruelties renown,
And emperors in Parian marble frown;
While the bright dames, to whom they humbly sued,
Still show the charms that their proud hearts subdued.

Fain would I Raphael's godlike art rehearse,
And show th' immortal labours in my verse,
Where from the mingled strength of shade and light
A new creation rises to my sight,
Such heavenly figures from his pencil flow,
So warm with life his blended colours glow.
From theme to theme with secret pleasure tost,
Amidst the soft variety I 'm lost:
Here pleasing airs my ravish'd soul confound
With circling notes and labyrinths of sound;
Here domes and temples rise in distant views,
And opening palaces invite my Muse.

How has kind Heaven adorn'd the happy land,
And scatter'd blessings with a wasteful hand!

But what avail her unexhausted stores,
Her blooming mountains, and her sunny shores,
With all the gifts that heaven and earth impart,
The smiles of nature, and the charms of art,
While proud oppression in her valleys reigns,
And tyranny usurps her happy plains?
The poor inhabitant beholds in vain
The reddening orange and the swelling grain:
Joyless he sees the growing oils and wines,
And in the myrtle's fragrant shade repines:
Starves, in the midst of nature's bounty curst,
And in the loaden vineyard dies for thirst.
Oh Liberty, thou goddess heavenly bright,
Profuse of bliss, and pregnant with delight!
Eternal pleasures in thy presence reign,
And smiling plenty leads thy wanton train;
Eased of her load subjection grows more light,
And poverty looks cheerful in thy sight;
Thou mak'st the gloomy face of nature gay,
Giv'st beauty to the sun, and pleasure to the day.

From Letter from Italy.

PROLOGUE TO SMITH'S PHÆDRA AND HIPPOLITUS.

Long has a race of heroes fill'd the stage,
That rant by note, and through the gamut rage;
In songs and airs express their martial fire,
Combat in trills, and in a fugue expire:
While, lull'd by sound, and undisturb'd by wit,
Calm and serene you indolently sit,
And, from the dull fatigue of thinking free,
Hear the facetious fiddle's repartee:
Our home-spun authors must forsake the field,
And Shakspeare to the soft Scarletti yield.

To your new taste the poet of this day
Was by a friend advised to form his play;
Had Valentini, musically coy,
Shunn'd Phædra's arms, and scorn'd the proffer'd joy:
It had not moved your wonder to have seen
An eunuch fly from an enamour'd queen:
How would it please, should she in English speak,
And could Hippolitus reply in Greek!
But he, a stranger to your modish way,
By your old rules must stand or fall to-day,
And hopes you will your foreign taste command,
To bear, for once, with what you understand.

THE date of this author's birth is unknown, but it was probably about 1671. He was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, and he published his Pastorals, the work by which he is chiefly known, about the commencement of the eighteenth century. His literary career seems to have been in the midst of great pecuniary difficulties, as he was reduced to translate Persian tales for Tonson the publisher, for a mere pittance. His chief merit as a poet consisted in his successful translation or adaptation of the works of others, of which his Distressed Mother, a play almost wholly rendered from the Andromaque of Racine, and his English versions of the Odes of Sappho, are sufficient proofs. Having acquired by his writings a considerable literary reputation and effective patronage, the latter part of his life was spent in competence and comfort. He died in June, 1749.

A RUSTIC RECESS.

This place may seem for shepherds' leisure made,
So close these elms inweave their lofty shade;
The twining woodbine, how it climbs! to breathe
Refreshing sweets around on all beneath.
The ground with grass of cheerful green bespread,
Through which the springing flower uprears the head:
Lo, here the kingcup of a golden hue,
Medlied with daisies white and endive blue,
And honeysuckles of a purple dye,
Confusion gay! bright waving to the eye.
Hark, how they warble in that brambly bush,
The gaudy goldfinch, and the speckly thrush;
The linnet green, with others framed for skill,
And blackbird fluting through his yellow bill:
In sprightly concert how they all combine,
Us prompting in the various songs to join:
Up, Argol, then, and to thy lip apply
Thy mellow pipe, or voice more sounding try:
And since our ewes have grazed, what harm if they
Lie round and listen while the lambkins play?

From the Fourth Pastoral.

THE HAPPY SWAIN.

Have ye seen the morning sky,
When the dawn prevails on high,
When, anon, some purply ray
Gives a sample of the day;
When, anon, the lark, on wing,
Strives to soar, and strains to sing?
Have ye seen th' ethereal blue
Gently shedding silvery dew,

Spangling o'er the silent green;
While the nightingale, unseen,
To the moon and stars, full bright,
Lonesome chants the hymn of night?
Have ye seen the broider'd May
All her scented bloom display,
Breezes opening, every hour,
This, and that, expecting flower,
While the mingling birds prolong,
From each bush, the vernal song?
Have ye seen the damask rose
Her unsullied blush disclose;
Or the lily's dewy bell,
In her glossy white, excel;
Or a garden varied o'er
With a thousand glories more?
By the beauties these display,
Morning, evening, night, or day;
By the pleasures these excite,
Endless sources of delight:
Judge, by them, the joys I find,
Since my Rosalind was kind;
Since she did herself resign
To my vows, for ever mine.

BEAUTIES OF A WINTER MORNING.

And yet but lately have I seen, ev'n here,
The winter in a lovely dress appear.
Ere yet the clouds let fall the treasured snow,
Or winds began through hazy skies to blow,
At evening a keen eastern breeze arose,
And the descending rain unsullied froze.
Soon as the silent shades of night withdrew,
The ruddy morn disclosed at once to view
The face of Nature in a rich disguise,
And brighten'd every object to my eyes:
For every shrub, and every blade of grass,
And every pointed thorn, seem'd wrought in glass;
In pearls and rubies rich the hawthorns show,
While through the ice the crimson berries glow.
The thick-sprung reeds, which watery marshes yield,
Seem'd polish'd lances in a hostile field.
The stag, in limpid currents, with surprise,
Sees crystal branches on his forehead rise:

The spreading oak, the beech, and towering pine,
Glazed over, in the freezing ether shine:
The frighted birds the rattling branches shun,
Which wave and glitter in the distant sun.

When if a sudden gust of wind arise,
The brittle forest into atoms flies;
The crackling wood beneath the tempest bends,
And in a spangled shower the prospect ends:
Or, if a southern gale the region warm,
And by degrees unbind the wintry charm,
The traveller a miry country sees,
And journeys sad beneath the dropping trees:
Like some deluded peasant, Merlin leads
Through fragrant bowers, and through delicious meads,
While here enchanted gardens to him rise,
And airy fabrics there attract his eyes:
His wandering feet the magic paths pursue,
And, while he thinks the fair illusion true,
The trackless scenes disperse in fluid air,
And woods, and wilds, and thorny ways, appear,
A tedious road the weary wretch returns,
And, as he goes, the transient vision mourns.

From an Epistle to the Earl of Dorset.

SONG.

From White's and Will's,
To purling rills
The love-sick Strephon flies;
There, full of woe,
His numbers flow,
And all in rhyme he dies.

The fair coquet,
With feign'd regret,
Invites him back to town;
But, when in tears
The youth appears,
She meets him with a frown.

Full oft the maid
This prank had play'd,
'Till angry Strephon swore;
And, what is strange,
Though loth to change,
Would never see her more.

This great master of the whole melody and power of the English language in its application to poetry, was born in London, on the 22d of May, 1688. Being from his infancy of a feeble frame and delicate constitution, his education was chiefly domestic; and after his twelfth year, the acquisitions which he made in learning were the result of his own undirected application. At a very early period, he manifested that love of poetry which could not be satisfied without attempts at composition; and when only a schoolboy, he constructed a play from Ogilby's Iliad, to be acted by his young class-fellows, the part of Ajax to be performed by the bulky gardener of the establishment. At this season, also, he wrote several lampoons, and translated nearly a fourth part of Ovid's Metamorphoses. The best known of his juvenile productions is, his Ode on Solitude, written before he was twelve years old, and which, besides being remarkable for the precocity of sentiment it exhibits, possesses a delicacy of language and harmony of versification, indicative of his future excellence in these qualifications. At fourteen, he translated the first book of the Thebais, and wrote his poem upon Silence, in imitation of that of Lord Rochester upon Nothing.

Having trained himself by these and similar exercises for the task of authorship, and possessing a delicacy of physical organization, that ripened his intellectual powers into a quick maturity, Pope was able to appear before the public at a season when few poets have exhibited even the buds of promise. He wrote at the age of sixteen his Pastorals, which soon took precedence of the Pastorals of Philips. At the age of eighteen, he produced the Messiah, a poem founded upon Virgil's Pollio, but which is far superior to the model. The history of Pope, from this period, is the history of his several distinguished productions, which appeared at intervals, and placed him, without a rival, at the head of the poetical world. The chief of these were, the Essay on Criticism, written in 1709, and published in 1711; The Rape of the Lock, written in the last-mentioned year; The Temple of Fame, composed when he had attained the age of twenty-two; and in 1712, the poem of Windsor Forest, which was suggested by Prior's Nut-brown Maid. These, and several minor pieces, although they had hitherto established his poetical reputation, had added nothing to his fortune, and he resolved therefore to attempt some literary task, by which his circumstances might be improved. He accordingly commenced, at the age of twenty-five, a translation of the Iliad of Homer, to be published by subscription. This labour he accomplished in five years, and the profits of the work were such as to gratify his utmost expectations. Such a favourable result encouraged him, in like manner, to attempt the Odyssey, which he finished with the aid of Broome and Fenton, reserving twelve books for his own share, and entrusting the other twelve to his associates.

The applause which Pope had procured by his writings, could scarcely escape the attacks of the envious; and a host of small critics, individually insignificant, but troublesome from their numbers, had never ceased to annoy him. It was now full time to retaliate, and, in 1728, he published The Dunciad, a work which fell among his opponents like an exterminating thunderbolt. The kingdom of the Dunces was shaken to its centre, and the whole tribe writhed in anguish, or howled in dismay. It must be acknowleged, however, that while Pope had the power to retaliate, he did not in every case use the "giant's strength" with proper discrimination. On this account, the chastisement of some was greatly beyond their demerits; and in several cases, individuals were branded as dunces, who were far from meriting such an odious distinction. Of these, it is only enough to mention the talented De Foe.

In 1733, and the following year, Pope published the three Epistles of the Essay on Man, a work that startled the reflective public, in consequence of the sceptical tendencies it was alleged to possess, and which formed a ground of keen theological controversy between the friends and opponents of the poet. After this period, he continued to compose incidental pieces, or translate from the ancients, and had planned an Epic poem upon the history of Brutus, the Trojan, when the growing infirmities of his naturally feeble constitution announced that his death was approaching. He expired on the 30th of May, 1744.



POPE.

MESSIAH: A SACRED ECLOGUE, IN IMITATION OF VIRGIL'S POLLIO.

Ye nymphs of Solyma! begin the song;
To heavenly themes sublimer strains belong.
The mossy fountains and the sylvan shades,
The dreams of Pindus and th' Aonian maids,
Delight no more—O Thou my voice inspire,
Who touch'd Isaiah's hallow'd lips with fire!
Rapt into future times, the Bard begun:
A Virgin shall conceive, a Virgin bear a Son!
From Jesse's root behold a branch arise,
Whose sacred flower with fragrance fills the skies:
Th' ethereal spirit o'er its leaves shall move,
And on its top descends the mystic Dove.
Ye Heavens! from high the dewy nectar pour,
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The sick and weak the healing plant shall aid,
From storms a shelter, and from heat a shade.
All crimes shall cease, and ancient frauds shall fail;
Returning Justice lift aloft her scale;
Peace o'er the world her olive wand extend,
And white-robed Innocence from Heaven descend.
Swift fly the years, and rise th' expected morn!
Oh spring to light, auspicious Babe, be born!
See, Nature hastes her earliest wreaths to bring,
With all the incense of the breathing spring:
See lofty Lebanon his head advance,
See nodding forests on the mountains dance:
See spicy clouds from lowly Saron rise,
And Carmel's flowery top perfumes the skies!
Hark! a glad voice the lonely desert cheers;
Prepare the way! a God, a God appears!
A God, a God! the vocal hills reply,
The rocks proclaim th' approaching Deity.
Lo, earth receives him from the bending skies!
Sink down, ye mountains; and ye valleys, rise;
With heads declined, ye cedars, homage pay;
Be smooth, ye rocks; ye rapid floods, give way!
The Saviour comes! by ancient bards foretold:
Hear him, ye deaf; and all ye blind, behold!
He from thick films shall purge the visual ray,
And on the sightless eye-ball pour the day:
'Tis he th' obstructed paths of sound shall clear,
And bid new music charm th' unfolding ear:
The dumb shall sing, the lame his crutch forego,
And leap exulting like the bounding roe.
No sigh, no murmur, the wide world shall hear,
From every face he wipes off every tear.
In adamantine chains shall Death be bound,
And Hell's grim tyrant feel th' eternal wound.
As the good shepherd tends his fleecy care,
Seeks freshest pasture, and the purest air;
Explores the lost, the wandering sheep directs,
By day o'ersees them, and by night protects;
The tender lambs he raises in his arms,
Feeds from his hand, and in his bosom warms;
Thus shall mankind his guardian care engage,
The promised father of the future age.
No more shall nation against nation rise,
Nor ardent warriors meet with hateful eyes,
Nor fields with gleaming steel be cover'd o'er,
The brazen trumpets kindle rage no more;
But useless lances into scythes shall bend,

*

And the broad falchion in a ploughshare end.
Then palaces shall rise; the joyful son
Shall finish what his short-lived sire begun;
Their vines a shadow to their race shall yield,
And the same hand that sow'd, shall reap the field.
The swain in barren deserts with surprise
Sees lilies spring, and sudden verdure rise;
And starts, amidst the thirsty wilds to hear
New falls of water murmuring in his ear.
On rifted rocks, the dragon's late abodes,
The green reed trembles, and the bulrush nods.
Waste sandy valleys, once perplex'd with thorn,
The spiry fir and shapely box adorn:
To leafless shrubs the flowery palms succeed,
And odorous myrtle to the noisome weed.
The lambs with wolves shall graze the verdant mead,
And boys in flowery bands the tiger lead:
The steer and lion at one crib shall meet,
And harmless serpents lick the pilgrim's feet.
The smiling infant in his hand shall take
The crested basilisk and speckled snake,
Pleased, the green lustre of the scales survey,
And with their forky tongue shall innocently play.
Rise, crown'd with light, imperial Salem, rise!
Exalt thy towery head, and lift thy eyes;
See a long race thy spacious courts adorn;
See future sons, and daughters yet unborn,
In crowding ranks on every side arise,
Demanding life, impatient for the skies!
See barbarous nations at thy gates attend,
Walk in thy light, and in thy temple bend;
See thy bright altars throng'd with prostrate kings,
And heap'd with products of Sabæan springs!
For thee Idume's spicy forests blow,
And seeds of gold in Ophir's mountains glow.
See heaven its sparkling portals wide display,
And break upon thee in a flood of day!
No more the rising Sun shall gild the morn,
Nor evening Cynthia fill her silver horn;
But lost, dissolved in thy superior rays,
One tide of glory, one unclouded blaze
O'erflow thy courts: the Light himself shall shine
Reveal'd, and God's eternal day be thine!
The seas shall waste, the skies in smoke decay,
Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away;
But fix'd his word, his saving power remains;
Thy realm for ever lasts, thy own MESSIAH reigns.

CANDIDATES FOR FAME.

First at the shrine the learned world appear,
And to the goddess thus prefer their prayer:—
Long have we sought t' instruct and please mankind,
With studies pale, with midnight vigils blind;
But thank'd by few, rewarded yet by none,
We here appeal to thy superior throne:
On wit and learning the just prize bestow,
For fame is all we must expect below.

The goddess heard, and bade the Muses raise
The golden trumpet of eternal praise:
From pole to pole the winds diffuse the sound,
That fills the circuit of the world around;
Not all at once, as thunder breaks the cloud;
The notes at first were rather sweet than loud:
By just degrees they every moment rise,
Fill the wide earth, and gain upon the skies.
At every breath were balmy odours shed,
Which still grew sweeter, as they wider spread;
Less fragrant scents th' unfolding rose exhales,
Or spices breathing in Arabian gales.

Next these, the good and just, an awful train,
Thus on their knees address the sacred fane:—
Since living virtue is with envy cursed,
And the best men are treated like the worst,
Do thou, just Goddess, call our merits forth,
And give each deed th' exact intrinsic worth.
Not with bare justice shall your act be crown'd
(Said Fame), but high above desert renown'd:
Let fuller notes th' applauding world amaze,
And the loud clarion labour in your praise.

This band dismiss'd, behold another crowd
Preferr'd the same request, and lowly bow'd;
The constant tenour of whose well-spent days
No less deserved a just return of praise.
But straight the direful Trump of Slander sounds;
Through the big dome the doubling thunder bounds;
Loud as the burst of cannon rends the skies,
The dire report through every region flies;
In every ear incessant rumours rung,
And gathering scandals grew on every tongue.
From the black trumpet's rusty concave broke
Sulphureous flames, and clouds of rolling smoke:
The poisonous vapour blots the purple skies,
And withers all before it as it flies.

A troop came next, who crowns and armour wore,
And proud defiance in their looks they bore:—
For thee (they cried) amidst alarms and strife,
We sail'd in tempests down the stream of life;
For thee whole nations fill'd with flames and blood,
And swam to empire through the purple flood.
Those ills we dared, thy inspiration own;
What virtue seem'd, was done for thee alone.
Ambitious fools! (the Queen replied, and frown'd)
Be all your acts in dark oblivion drown'd;
There sleep forgot, with mighty tyrants gone,
Your statues moulder'd, and your names unknown!
A sudden cloud straight snatch'd them from my sight,
And each majestic phantom sunk in night.
Then came the smallest tribe I yet had seen;
Plain was their dress, and modest was their mien:—
Great idol of mankind! we neither claim
The praise of merit, nor aspire to fame!
But, safe in deserts from th' applause of men,
Would die unheard of, as we lived unseen.
'Tis all we beg thee, to conceal from sight
Those acts of goodness which themselves requite.
O let us still the secret joy partake,
To follow virtue ev'n for virtue's sake.
And live there men, who slight immortal fame?
Who then with incense shall adore our name?
But, mortals! know, 'tis still our greatest pride,
To blaze those virtues which the good would hide.
Rise! Muses, rise! add all your tuneful breath;
These must not sleep in darkness and in death.
She said: in air the trembling music floats,
And on the winds triumphant swell the notes;
So soft, though high, so loud, and yet so clear,
Ev'n listening angels lean from heaven to hear:
To farthest shores th' ambrosial spirit flies,
Sweet to the world, and grateful to the skies.

From The Temple of Fame.

A FRAGMENT.

What are the falling rills, the pendant shades,
The morning bowers, the evening colonnades,
But soft recesses for th' uneasy mind
To sigh unheard in, to the passing wind!

So the struck deer, in some sequester'd part,
Lies down to die (the arrow in his heart);
There hid in shades, and wasting day by day,
Inly he bleeds, and pants his soul away.

MUTUAL DEPENDANCE OF ALL UPON EACH OTHER.

Look round our world; behold the chain of Love
Combining all below, and all above.
See plastic Nature working to this end,
The single atoms each to other tend,
Attract, attracted to, the next in place
Form'd and impell'd its neighbour to embrace.
See matter next with various life endued,
Press to one centre still, the General Good.
See dying vegetables life sustain,
See life dissolving vegetate again:
All forms that perish other forms supply
(By turns we catch the vital breath, and die),
Like bubbles on the sea of Matter borne,
They rise, they break, and to that sea return.
Nothing is foreign; parts relate to whole;
One all-extending, all-preserving Soul
Connects each being, greatest with the least;
Made Beast in aid of Man, and Man of Beast;
All served, all serving: nothing stands alone;
The chain holds on, and where it ends, unknown.
Has God, thou fool! work'd solely for thy good,
Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food?
Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,
For him as kindly spread the flowery lawn:
Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings?
Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.
Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat?
Loves of his own and raptures swell the note.
The bounding steed you pompously bestride,
Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.
Is thine alone the seed that strews the plain?
The birds of heaven shall vindicate their grain.
Thine the full harvest of the golden year?
Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer:
The hog, that ploughs not, nor obeys thy call,
Lives on the labours of this lord of all.

Know, Nature's children all divide her care;
The fur that warms a monarch, warm'd a bear.
While man exclaims, "See all things for my use!"
"See man for mine!" replies a pamper'd goose:
And just as short of reason he must fall,
Who thinks all made for one, not one for all.

From Essay on Man: Epistle III.

STRENGTH OF THE RULING PASSION IN DEATH.

In this one passion man can strength enjoy,
As fits give vigour, just when they destroy.
Time, that on all things lays his lenient hand,
Yet tames not this; it sticks to our last sand.
Consistent in our follies and our sins,
Here honest Nature ends as she begins.
Old politicians chew on wisdom past,
And totter on in business to the last;
As weak, as earnest, and as gravely out,
As sober Lanesborough dancing in the gout.
A salmon's belly, Helluo, was thy fate;
The doctor call'd, declares all help too late:
"Mercy!" cries Helluo, "mercy on my soul!
Is there no hope?—Alas!—then bring the jowl."
The frugal crone, whom praying priests attend,
Still strives to save the hallow'd taper's end,
Collects her breath, as ebbing life retires,
For one puff more, and in that puff expires.
"Odious! in woollen! 'twould a saint provoke
(Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke);
No, let a charming Chintz, and Brussels lace,
Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face:
One would not, sure, be frightful when one 's dead—
And—Betty—give this cheek a little red."
The Courtier smooth, who forty years had shined
An humble servant to all human kind,
Just brought out this, when scarce his tongue could stir,
"If—where I 'm going—I could serve you, Sir?"
"I give and I devise (old Euclio said,
And sigh'd) my lands and tenements to Ned."
Your money, Sir?—"My money, Sir! what all?
Why,—if I must—(then wept) I give it Paul."
The manor, Sir?—"The manor! hold," he cried:
"Not that,—I cannot part with that"—and died.

And you! brave Cobham, to the latest breath,
Shall feel your ruling passion strong in death:
Such in those moments as in all the past,
"Oh, save my country, Heaven!" shall be your last.

From Moral Essays: Epistle I.

TIMON'S VILLA.

At Timon's Villa let us pass a day,
Where all cry out, "What sums are thrown away!"
So proud, so grand; of that stupendous air,
Soft and Agreeable come never there.
Greatness, with Timon, dwells in such a draught
As brings all Brobdignag before your thought.
To compass this, his Building is a Town,
His pond an Ocean, his parterre a Down:
Who but must laugh, the Master when he sees,
A puny insect, shivering at a breeze!
Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!
The whole, a labour'd Quarry above ground.
Two Cupids squirt before: a Lake behind
Improves the keenness of the Northern wind.
His Gardens next your admiration call;
On every side you look, behold the Wall!
No pleasing Intricacies intervene,
No artful Wildness to perplex the scene;
Grove nods at grove, each Alley has a brother,
And half the platform just reflects the other.
The suffering eye inverted Nature sees,
Trees cut to Statues, Statues thick as trees!
With here a Fountain, never to be play'd;
And there a Summer-house that knows no shade;
Here Amphitrite sails through myrtle bowers;
There Gladiators fight, or die in flowers;
Unwater'd, see the drooping sea-horse mourn,
And swallows roost in Nilus' dusty Urn.
My Lord advances with majestic mien,
Smit with the mighty pleasure to be seen:
But soft—by regular approach—not yet—
First through the length of yon hot Terrace sweat;
And when up ten steep slopes you've dragg'd your thighs,
Just at his Study door he 'll bless your eyes.
His Study! with what Authors is it stored?
In Books, not Authors, curious is my Lord;

To all their dated backs he turns you round;
These Aldus printed, those Du Sueil has bound.
Lo, some are Vellum, and the rest as good
For all his Lordship knows, but they are Wood.
For Locke or Milton, 'tis in vain to look,
These shelves admit not any modern book.
And now the Chapel's silver bell you hear,
That summons you to all the Pride of Prayer:
Light quirks of Music, broken and uneven,
Make the soul dance upon a jig to Heaven.
On painted ceilings you devoutly stare,
Where sprawl the Saints of Verrio or Laguerre,
Or gilded clouds in fair expansion lie,
And bring all Paradise before your eye.
To rest, the Cushion and soft Dean invite,
Who never mentions Hell to ears polite.
But hark! the chiming Clocks to dinner call;
A hundred footsteps scrape the marble Hall:
The rich Beaufet well-colour'd Serpents grace,
And gaping Tritons spew to wash your face.
Is this a dinner? this a genial room?
No, 'tis a Temple, and a Hecatomb.
A solemn Sacrifice perform'd in state,
You drink by measure, and to minutes eat.
So quick retires each flying course, you'd swear
Sancho's dread Doctor and his Wand were there.
Between each Act the trembling salvers ring,
From soup to sweet wine, and God bless the King.
In plenty starving, tantalized in state,
And complaisantly help'd to all I hate;
Treated, caress'd, and tired, I take my leave,
Sick of his civil pride from morn to eve;
I curse such lavish cost, and little skill,
And swear no day was ever past so ill.

From Moral Essays: Epistle IV.

THE LITERARY PATRON.

Proud as Apollo on his forked hill,
Sate full-blown Bufo, puff'd by every quill;
Fed with soft Dedication all day long,
Horace and he went hand and hand in song.
His Library (where busts of Poets dead
And a true Pindar stood without a head)

Received of wits an undistinguish'd race,
Who first his judgment ask'd, and then a place;
Much they extoll'd his pictures, much his seat,
And flatter'd every day, and some days eat;
Till, grown more frugal in his riper days,
He paid some bards with port, and some with praise:
To some a dry rehearsal was assign'd,
And others (harder still) he paid in kind.
Dryden alone (what wonder?) came not nigh,
Dryden alone escaped his judging eye:
But still the Great have kindness in reserve—
He help'd to bury whom he help'd to starve.

From Prologue to the Satires.

ON A CERTAIN LADY AT COURT.

I know the thing that 's most uncommon;
(Envy be silent, and attend!)
I know a reasonable Woman,
Handsome and witty, yet a Friend:

Not warp'd by Passion, awed by Rumour;
Not grave through Pride, nor gay through Folly;
An equal mixture of Good Humour,
And sensible soft Melancholy.

"Has she no faults then (Envy says), Sir?"
Yes, she has one, I must aver:
When all the world conspires to praise her,
The woman's deaf, and does not hear.

MUTUAL FLATTERY.

The Temple late two brother Sergeants saw,
Who deem'd each other Oracles of Law;
With equal talents, these congenial souls,
One lull'd th' Exchequer, and one stunn'd the Rolls;
Each had a gravity would make you split,
And shook his head at Murray, as a Wit.
'Twas, "Sir, your law"—and "Sir, your eloquence,"
"Yours, Cowper's manner"—and "Yours, Talbot's sense."
Thus we dispose of all poetic merit,
Yours Milton's genius, and mine Homer's spirit.

Call Tibbald Shakspeare, and he 'll swear the Nine,
Dear Cibber! never match'd one Ode of thine.
Lord! how we strut through Merlin's Cave, to see
No Poets there, but Stephen, you, and me.
Walk with respect behind, while we at ease
Weave laurel Crowns, and take what names we please.
"My dear Tibullus! if that will not do,
Let me be Horace, and be Ovid you:
Or, I 'm content, allow me Dryden's strains,
And you shall rise up Otway for your pains."

From Imitations of Horace.

BELINDA'S VISION.

Sol through white curtains shot a timorous ray,
And oped those eyes that must eclipse the day:
Now lap-dogs give themselves the rousing shake,
And sleepless lovers, just at twelve, awake:
Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knock'd the ground,
And the press'd watch return'd a silver sound.
Belinda still her downy pillow prest,
Her guardian Sylph prolong'd the balmy rest:
'Twas he had summon'd to her silent bed
The morning dream that hover'd o'er her head.
A youth more glittering than a birth-night beau
(That ev'n in slumber caused her cheek to glow)
Seem'd to her ear his winning lips to lay,
And thus in whispers said, or seem'd to say:
Fairest of mortals, thou distinguish'd care
Of thousand bright Inhabitants of Air!
If e'er one Vision touch thy infant thought,
Of all the Nurse and all the Priest have taught;
Of airy Elves by moonlight shadows seen,
The silver token, and the circled green,
Or virgins visited by Angel Powers,
With golden crowns and wreaths of heavenly flowers;
Hear, and believe! thy own importance know,
Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.
Some secret truths, from learned pride conceal'd,
To Maids alone and Children are reveal'd:
What though no credit doubting Wits may give?
The Fair and Innocent shall still believe.
Know then, unnumber'd Spirits round thee fly,
The light Militia of the lower sky:

*

These, though unseen, are ever on the wing,
Hang o'er the Box, and hover round the Ring.
Think what an equipage thou hast in air,
And view with scorn two Pages and a Chair.
As now your own, our beings were of old,
And once enclosed in Woman's beauteous mould;
Thence, by a soft transition, we repair
From earthly vehicles to these of air.
Think not, when Woman's transient breath is fled,
That all her vanities at once are dead;
Succeeding vanities she still regards,
And though she plays no more, o'erlooks the cards.
Her joy in gilded Chariots, when alive,
And love of Ombre, after death survive.
For when the Fair in all their pride expire,
To their first Elements their souls retire:
The sprites of fiery Termagants in Flame
Mount up, and take a Salamander's name.
Soft yielding minds to Water glide away,
And sip, with Nymphs, their elemental tea.
The graver Prude sinks downward to a Gnome,
In search of mischief still on Earth to roam.
The light Coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,
And sport and flutter in the fields of Air.

From The Rape of the Lock.



This author would perhaps have never descended to posterity, but for his connexion with Pope. He was born in Cheshire, but the year and place of his birth are unknown. He was educated first at Eton school, and afterwards at St. John's College, and at an early period evinced such a fondness for versification, that he was commonly termed by his companions, 'the poet.' His first public appearance in authorship was in connexion with Ozell and Oldisworth, with whom he published a prose translation of the Iliad, a work which was soon thrown into the shade by the more popular version of Pope. The latter great poet, however, was soon conscious of the merits of Broome, whom he invited, in conjunction with Fenton, to aid him in the translation of the Odyssey; and Broome's share of the labour was the second, sixth, eighth, eleventh, twelfth, sixteenth, and twenty-third books, besides all the notes, for which he received the inadequate remuneration of five hundred pounds, and as many copies of the work for presentation as amounted to one hundred more.

The latter part of the life of Broome was passed in comfortable circumstances, as he married a wealthy widow, and held two church livings in Suffolk. In 1728, he was made Doctor of Laws, on the occasion of the king's visit to Cambridge. He died at Bath, on the 16th of November, 1745. Broome excelled in the command of appropriate language, rather than fertility of imagination, and therefore he was more successful as a translator than a poet.

POVERTY AND POETRY.

'Twas sung of old how one Amphion
Could by his verses tame a lion.

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POVERTY AND POETRY.

'Twas sung of old how one Amphion
Could by his verses tame a lion,
And, by his strange enchanting tunes,
Make bears or wolves dance rigadoons:
His songs could call the timber down,
And form it into house or town;
But it is plain that in these times
No house is raised by poets' rhymes;
They for themselves can only rear
A few wild castles in the air;
Poor are the brethren of the bays,
Down from high strains, to ekes and ayes.
The Muses too are virgins yet,
And may be—till they portions get.

Yet still the doating rhymer dreams,
And sings of Helicon's bright streams;
But Helicon, for all his clatter,
Yields only uninspiring water;
Yet ev'n athirst he sweetly sings
Of Nectar, and Elysian springs.

What dire malignant planet sheds,
Ye bards, his influence on your heads?
Lawyers, by endless controversies,
Consume unthinking clients' purses,
As Pharaoh's kine, which strange and odd is,
Devour'd the plump and well-fed bodies.

The grave physician, who by physic,
Like death, dispatches him that is sick,
Pursues a sure and thriving trade;
Though patients die, the doctor 's paid:
Licensed to kill, he gains a palace,
For what another mounts the gallows.

In shady groves the Muses stray,
And love in flowery meads to play;
An idle crew! whose only trade is
To shine in trifles, like our ladies;
In dressing, dancing, toying, singing,
While wiser Pallas thrives by spinning:
Thus they gain nothing to bequeath
Their votaries, but a laurel wreath.

But love rewards the bard! the fair
Attend his song, and ease his care:
Alas! fond youth, your plea you urge ill
Without a jointure, though a Virgil:
Could you like Phœbus sing, in vain
You nobly swell the lofty strain;
Coy Daphne flies, and you will find as
Hard hearts as hers in your Belindas.

But then some say you purchase fame,
And gain that envied prize—a name;
Great recompence! like his who sells
A diamond, for beads and bells.
Will fame be thought sufficient bail
To keep the poet from the jail?

Thus the brave soldier, in the wars,
Gets empty praise, and aching scars;
Is paid with fame and wooden legs;
And, starved, the glorious vagrant begs.

THE COQUETTE.

Sillia, with uncontested sway,
Like Rome's famed tyrant reigns;
Beholds adoring crowds obey,
And heroes proud to wear her chains:
Yet stoops, like him, to every prize,
Busy to murder beaux and flies.

She aims at every trifling heart,
  Attends each flatterer's vows;
And, like a picture drawn with art,
  A look on all that gaze bestows.
O! may the power who lovers rules,
Grant rather scorn, than hope with fools!

Mistaken nymph! the crowds that gaze
  Adore thee into shame;
Unguarded beauty is disgrace,
  And coxcombs, when they praise, defame.
O! fly such brutes in human shapes,
Nor, like th' Ægyptians, worship apes.

ON DEATH.

Abash'd, ashamed, I cry, Eternal Power,
I yield! I wait resign'd th' appointed hour!
Man, foolish man, no more thy soul deceive!
To die, is but the surest way to live:
When age we ask, we ask it in our wrong,
And pray our time of suffering may be long;
The nauseous draught, and dregs of life to drain,
And feel infirmity, and length of pain!
What art thou, life, that we should court thy stay?
A breath, one single gasp must puff away!
A short-lived flower, that with the day must fade!
A fleeting vapour, and an empty shade!
A stream, that silently but swiftly glides
To meet eternity's immeasured tides!
A being, lost alike by pain or joy!
A fly can kill it, or a worm destroy!
Impair'd by labour, and by ease undone,
Commenced in tears, and ended in a groan!
Ev'n while I write, the transient NOW is past,
And death more near, this sentence than the last!
As some weak isthmus seas from seas divides,
Beat by rude waves, and sapp'd by rushing tides,
Torn from its base, no more their fury bears,
At once they close, at once it disappears:
Such, such is life! the mark of misery placed
Between two worlds, the future and the past;
To time, to sickness, and to death, a prey,
It sinks, the frail possession of a day!

The talented and popular author of Night Thoughts was born at Upham, near Winchester, in June, 1681; and was the son of Edward Young, rector of Upham, and afterwards Dean of Sarum. He was first educated at Winchester School, where he remained till the age of eighteen, after which he became a student of Corpus Christi College. In 1708, he was nominated to a Fellowship in All-Souls, and in 1719, he took his degree of Doctor of Laws. Little is known of the early history and studies of the future poet, except the following anecdote, which shows that his mind had not been allowed to lie idle. Tindal, the atheistic writer, who used to spend much of his time at All-Souls, was in the habit of debating with the young students, and perplexing them with difficulties on the subject of theology; but upon Young he could make no impression. "The other boys," said the sceptical sophist, "I can always answer, because I know whence they have their arguments, which I have read a hundred times; but that fellow Young is continually pestering me with something of his own."

When Young had discovered the strength of his poetical powers, he was fired by the example of Addison, who, upon the strength of The Campaign, had risen to promotion and wealth. He therefore commenced with political eulogies, and afterwards dedicated his poem on The Last Day to the Queen; but the death of her Majesty disappointed whatever expectations he might have formed in that quarter. Previous to the royal demise, he also published The Force of Religion, or Vanquished Love, a poem founded on the execution of Lady Jane Grey, and her husband, Lord Guildford Dudley. On the accession of George I., Young addressed the new sovereign in strains as laudatory as those he had used towards Queen Anne, but he still remained unplaced and unpensioned. A patron indeed he obtained, but this was no other than the meteoric Duke of Wharton, whose patronage was more likely to blight than enliven. Young then turned his attention to dramatic writing, and produced Busiris, which was acted at Drury Lane in 1719; and The Revenge, which was acted in 1731. During the interval he wrote a Lament on the death of Addison, a Paraphrase on part of the Book of Job, and his Satires, which were published under the title of The Universal Passion. By this last production he realised more than 3,000*l.*

Young did not enter into holy orders until 1728, and in 1730 he was presented to the rectory of Welwyn, in Hertfordshire. Of his preparation for the pastoral office, an anecdote is told of Young, which places his unsuspecting simplicity in a ludicrous point of view. Instead of consulting with the heads of the church as to the authors which he ought to study, he applied to Pope, who mischievously advised him to study the writings of Thomas Aquinas. Young withdrew, and disappeared for half a year, to the great alarm of Pope, who found his friend in an obscure dwelling in the suburbs, entangled in the metaphysics of the middle ages, from which he was rescued with some difficulty.

After he had assumed the clerical office, Young continued to write both in prose and verse, upon subjects connected with religion, morals, and politics. But the time arrived when he happily resolved to abandon the beaten track which he had already trodden too long, and attempt some new and better path. In this spirit, he commenced the Night Thoughts, a poem which no other writer that we know of could have produced. The prevailing tone of the work is that of a deep and solemn sadness; and that it might not be reckoned a mere poetical sadness, he declares, in his preface to The Complaint, that "the occasion of the poem was real, not fictitious; and that the facts mentioned did naturally pour these moral reflections on the thoughts of the writer." The death of his beloved daughter Narcissa, also, and the mournful circumstances connected with her funeral, were events too well known to be attributed to mere fiction.

Although the poet was more than sixty when he produced this, the longest and best of his works, the activity of his mind was not exhausted by the effort; so that, in 1745, he wrote Reflections on the Public Situation of the Kingdom, a poem addressed to the Duke of Newcastle; and in 1754 he published his prose work, entitled, The Centaur not Fabulous. Several small pieces followed, and his last poem, Resignation, was written when he was more than eighty. He died in April, 1765, full of years, but retaining his faculties to the last.



YOUNG.

EXECUTION OF LADY JANE GREY.

While yet the blow's first dreadful weight she feels,
And with its force her resolution reels,
Large doors unfolding, with a mournful sound,
To view discover, weltering on the ground,
Three headless trunks, of those whose arms maintain'd,
And in her wars immortal glory gain'd;
The lifted axe assured her ready doom,
And silent mourners sadden'd all the room.
Shall I proceed, or here break off my tale,
Nor truths, to stagger human faith, reveal?
She met this utmost malice of her fate
With Christian dignity, and pious state:
The beating storm's propitious rage she blest,
And all the martyr triumph'd in her breast:



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And all the martyr triumph'd in her breast:

Her lord and father, for a moment's space,
She strictly folded in her soft embrace!
Then thus she spoke, while angels heard on high,
And sudden gladness smiled along the sky:
"Your over-fondness has not moved my hate;
I am well pleased you make my death so great;
I joy I cannot save you; and have given
Two lives, much dearer than my own, to heaven,
If so the Queen decrees:—But I have cause
To hope my blood will satisfy the laws,
And there is mercy still, for you, in store:
With me the bitterness of death is o'er:
He shot his sting in that farewell embrace;
And all that is to come is joy and peace.
Then let mistaken sorrow be suppressed,
Nor seem to envy my approaching rest."
Then, turning to the ministers of fate,
She, smiling, says, "My victory 's complete:
And tell your Queen, I thank her for the blow,
And grieve my gratitude I cannot show:
A poor return I leave in England's crown,
For everlasting pleasure, and renown:
Her guilt alone allays this happy hour;
Her guilt—the only vengeance in her power."
Not Rome untouch'd with sorrow heard her fate,
And fierce Maria pitied her too late.

From The Force of Religion.

ANTICIPATION OF THE LAST DAY.

Ah mournful turn! the blissful earth, who late
At leisure on her axle roll'd in state;
While thousand golden planets knew no rest,
Still onward in their circling journey prest;
A grateful change of seasons some to bring,
And sweet vicissitude of fall and spring:
Some through vast oceans to conduct the keel,
And some those watery worlds to sink, or swell:
Around her some their splendours to display,
And gild her globe with tributary day:
This world so great, of joy the bright abode,
Heaven's darling child, and favourite of her God,
Now looks an exile from her Father's care,
Deliver'd o'er to darkness and despair.
No sun in radiant glory shines on high:
No light, but from the terrors of the sky:

Fall'n are her mountains, her famed rivers lost,
And all into a second chaos tost:
One universal ruin spreads abroad;
Nothing is safe beneath the throne of God.
Such, earth! thy fate: what then canst thou afford
To comfort and support thy guilty lord?
Man, haughty lord of all beneath the moon,
How must he bend his soul's ambition down?
Prostrate, the reptile own, and disavow
His boasted stature, and assuming brow?
Claim kindred with the clay, and curse his form,
That speaks distinction from his sister worm?
What dreadful pangs the trembling heart invade!
Lord, why dost thou forsake whom thou hast made?
Who can sustain thy anger? Who can stand
Beneath the terrors of thy lifted hand?
It flies the reach of thought; oh save me, Power
Of powers supreme, in that tremendous hour!
Thou who beneath the frown of fate hast stood,
And in thy dreadful agony sweat blood;
Thou, who for me, through every throbbing vein,
Hast felt the keenest edge of mortal pain;
Whom death led captive through the realms below,
And taught those horrid mysteries of woe;
Defend me, O my God! Oh save me, Power
Of powers supreme, in that tremendous hour!

From The Last Day.

PRIDE.

Some go to church, proud humbly to repent,
And come back much more guilty than they went:
One way they look, another way they steer,
Pray to the gods, but would have mortals hear;
And when their sins they set sincerely down,
They'll find that their religion has been one.
Others with wishful eyes on glory look,
When they have got their picture towards a book,
Or pompous title, like a gaudy sign,
Meant to betray dull sots to wretched wine.
If at his title T——— had dropp'd his quill,
T——— might have pass'd for a great genius still.
But T——— alas! (excuse him, if you can)
Is now a scribbler, who was once a man.
Imperious, some a classic fame demand,
For heaping up, with a laborious hand,

A waggon load of meanings for one word,
While A 's deposed, and B with pomp restored.
Some, for renown, on scraps of learning doat,
And think they grow immortal as they quote.
To patchwork learn'd quotations are allied;
Both strive to make our poverty our pride.
On glass how witty is a noble peer!
Did ever diamond cost a man so dear?
Polite diseases make some idiots vain;
Which, if unfortunately well, they feign.
Of folly, vice, disease, men proud we see;
And (stranger still!) of blockheads' flattery;
Whose praise defames; as if a fool should mean,
By spitting on your face, to make it clean.
Nor is 't enough all hearts are swoln with pride,
Her power is mighty, as her realm is wide.
What can she not perform? The Love of Fame
Made bold Alphonsus his Creator blame:
Empedocles hurl'd down the burning steep:
And (stronger still!) made Alexander weep.
Nay, it holds Delia from a second bed,
Though her loved lord has four half months been dead.
This passion with a pimple have I seen
Retard a cause, and give a judge the spleen:
By this inspired (O ne'er to be forgot!)
Some lords have learn'd to spell, and some to knot.
It makes Globose a speaker in the House;
He hems, and is deliver'd of his mouse.
It makes dear self on well-bred tongues prevail,
And *I* the little hero of each tale.
Sick with the Love of Fame, what throngs pour in,
Unpeople court, and leave the senate thin!
My growing subject seems but just begun,
And, chariot-like, I kindle as I run.

From Love of Fame.

SCRIBBLERS.

Shall we not censure all the motley train,
Whether with ale irriguous, or champaign?
Whether they tread the vale of prose, or climb,
And whet their appetites on cliffs of rhyme;
The college sloven, or embroider'd spark;
The purple prelate, or the parish clerk;
The quiet quidnunc, or demanding prig;
The plaintiff Tory, or defendant Whig;

Rich, poor, male, female, young, old, gay, or sad;
Whether extremely witty, or quite mad;
Profoundly dull, or shallowly polite;
Men that read well, or men that only write;
Whether peers, porters, tailors, tune the reeds,
And measuring words to measuring shapes succeeds;
For bankrupts write, when ruin'd shops are shut,
As maggots crawl from out a perish'd nut.
His hammer this, and that his trowel quits,
And, wanting sense for tradesmen, serve for wits.
By thriving men subsists each other trade;
Of every broken craft a writer 's made:
Thus his material, Paper, takes its birth
From tatter'd rags of all the stuff on earth.
Hail, fruitful Isle! to thee alone belong
Millions of wits, and brokers in old song;
Thee well a land of liberty we name,
Where all are free to scandal and to shame;
Thy sons, by print, may set their hearts at ease,
And be mankind's contempt, whene'er they please;
Like trodden filth, their vile and abject sense
Is unperceived, but when it gives offence:
This heavy prose our injured reason tires;
Their verse immortal kindles loose desires:
Our age they puzzle, and corrupt our prime,
Our sport and pity, punishment and crime.
What glorious motives urge our authors on,
Thus to undo, and thus to be undone!
One loses his estate, and down he sits,
To show (in vain!) he still retains his wits:
Another marries, and his dear proves keen;
He writes as an Hypnotic for the spleen:
Some write, confined by physic; some, by debt;
Some, for 'tis Sunday; some, because 'tis wet;
Through private pique some do the public right,
And love their king and country out of spite;
Another writes because his father writ,
And proves himself a bastard by his wit.
Has Lico learning, humour, thought profound?
Neither: why write then? He wants twenty pound:
His belly, not his brains, this impulse give;
He 'll grow immortal; for he cannot live:
He rubs his awful front, and takes his ream,
With no provision made, but of his theme;
Perhaps a title has his fancy smit,
Or a quaint motto, which he thinks has wit:

He writes, in inspiration puts his trust,
Though wrong his thoughts, the gods will make them just;
Genius directly from the gods descends,
And who by labour would distrust his friends?
Thus having reason'd with consummate skill,
In immortality he dips his quill:
And, since blank paper is denied the press,
He mingles the whole alphabet by guess;
In various sets, which various words compose,
Of which, he hopes, mankind the meaning knows.
So sounds spontaneous from the Sibyl broke,
Dark to herself the wonders which she spoke;
The priests found out the meaning, if they could;
And nations stared at what none understood.

From Epistle I: to Pope.

NARCISSA.

Sweet harmonist! and Beautiful as sweet!
And Young as beautiful! and Soft as young!
And Gay as soft! and Innocent as gay!
And Happy (if aught Happy here) as good!
For fortune fond had built her nest on high.
Like birds quite exquisite of note and plume,
Transfixt by fate (who loves a lofty mark),
How from the summit of the grove she fell,
And left it unharmonious! All its charms
Extinguish'd in the wonders of her song!
Her song still vibrates in my ravish'd ear,
Still melting there, and with voluptuous pain
(O to forget her!) thrilling through my heart!
Soon as the lustre languish'd in her eye,
Dawning a dimmer day on human sight;
And on her cheek, the residence of spring,
Pale omen sat; and scatter'd fears around
On all that saw; (and who would cease to gaze,
That once had seen?) with haste, parental haste,
I flew, I snatch'd her from the rigid north,
Her native bed, on which bleak Boreas blew,
And bore her nearer to the sun; the sun
(As if the sun could envy) check'd his beam;
Denied his wonted succour; nor with more
Regret beheld her drooping, than the bells
Of lilies; fairest lilies, not so fair!

Turn, hopeless thought! turn from her:—Thought repell'd
Resenting rallies, and wakes every woe.
Snatch'd ere thy prime! and in thy bridal hour!
And when kind fortune, with thy lover, smiled!
And when high flavour'd thy fresh opening joys!
And when blind man pronounced thy bliss complete!
And on a foreign shore; where strangers wept!
Strangers to Thee; and, more surprising still,
Strangers to Kindness, wept: their eyes let fall
Inhuman tears! strange tears! that trickled down
From marble hearts! obdurate tenderness!
A tenderness that call'd them more severe;
In spite of Nature's soft persuasion, steel'd;
While nature melted, superstition raved;
That mourn'd the dead; and this denied a grave.
Their sighs incensed; sighs foreign to the will!
Their will the tiger suck'd, outraged the storm.
For, oh! the cursed ungodliness of zeal!
While sinful flesh relented, spirit nursed
In blind infallibility's embrace,
The sainted spirit petrified the breast;
Denied the charity of dust, to spread
O'er dust! a charity their dogs enjoy.
What could I do? What succour? What resource?
With pious sacrilege, a grave I stole;
With impious piety, that grave I wrong'd;
Short in my duty; coward in my grief!
More like her murderer, than friend, I crept,
With soft-suspended step, and, muffled deep
In midnight darkness, whisper'd my last sigh.
I whisper'd what should echo through their realms;
Nor writ her name, whose tomb should pierce the skies.
Presumptuous fear! How durst I dread her foes,
While Nature's loudest dictates I obey'd?
Pardon necessity, blest shade! Of grief
And indignation rival bursts I pour'd;
Half execration mingled with my prayer;
Kindled at man, while I his God adored;
Sore grudged the savage land her sacred dust;
Stampt the curst soil; and with humanity
(Denied Narcissa) wish'd them all a grave.

From Night Thoughts: Night III.

This amiable and distinguished poet was born in Devonshire, in 1688. After having received an education at the school of Barnstaple, he was apprenticed to a silk-mercer in London. But he soon became weary of his occupation, and easily persuaded his master to discharge him; after which he entered the service of the Duchess of Monmouth, as secretary. In this situation he composed his Rural Sports, and in the following year (1714), The Shepherd's Week, consisting of six Pastorals, in which he delineated the occupations and amusements of our peasantry. In this work his chief aim was to show, that a close adherence to nature in pastoral poetry could produce nothing but what was low, barren, and contemptible. But the result was far beyond the author's calculations. The public were surprised with the novelty of such an experiment; and the pictures of humble life, which were drawn with such fidelity only to be laughed at, were perused with attention and delight.

Gay had tried dramatic writing unsuccessfully in 1713, by his comedy, called The Wife of Bath; but he repeated the attempt with another comedy, entitled The What d'ye call it? which was more successful. In 1717, he produced, with the aid it is said of Pope and Arbuthnot, the comedy of Three Hours after Marriage, one design of which was to ridicule Dr. Woodward; but the purpose failed, for the play was hooted off the stage.

The fortunes of the poet had not prospered in the mean time consistently with his labours and expectations. In the last year of Queen Anne's reign he was appointed secretary to the Earl of Clarendon, ambassador to the court of Hanover; but the death of the queen deprived him of that office, while his unfortunate dedication of The What d'ye call it, to Lord Bolingbroke, put an end to his hopes of office under George I. In his friends and the public, however, he found a more steady patronage; for having published his Poems by subscription in 1720, he raised by it a thousand pounds, with which he purchased an annuity. After this he produced his tragedy of The Captives, which was acted at Drury Lane in 1723, but with indifferent success. Three years afterwards he wrote a volume of Fables, for the improvement of the young Duke of Cumberland, for which he was promised an adequate reward, a promise which he expected to be fulfilled on the accession of George II.; but the only appointment he received on the occasion was that of Gentleman Usher to the Princess Louisa. He indignantly refused the offer, declaring that he was too old for such an office. Such was the end of his expectations of court patronage, upon which he had hitherto so fondly trusted.

Gay being thus obliged to rely upon his own efforts, resolved to strike out a new path to fame and profit. He had been indignant, in common with many others, at the fashion into which the Italian Opera had grown, when Dean Swift observed to him one day, 'what a pretty sort of thing a Newgate Pastoral would make.' These circumstances produced the Beggar's Opera. The friends of the poet, when the work was introduced upon the stage, trembled for the success of so novel an experiment: but it took the public by storm, and the success was astounding. Night after night the play was performed with undiminished applause, and from the metropolis it travelled to the boards of the provincial towns, to Wales, to Scotland, and Ireland; while the songs of the Beggar's Opera were printed upon fans, and the scenes painted upon house-screens. It is needless to add, that the Italian Opera fled in dismay, and did not return to England till the danger was over. This reception encouraged Gay to write a second part of the Beggar's Opera, under the title of Polly; but its representation was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain, on account of its alleged immorality, although political, rather than moral, hostility was supposed to have prompted the prohibition. Gay, therefore, published the second part by subscription, and the sale produced him more than a thousand pounds.

After this, the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry received Gay into their house, where he continued during the remainder of his life, cheered by the hospitable kindness of his noble patrons. That life, however, which had been so often embittered and disappointed by court intrigue and ingratitude, was already drawing to a close, and he died on the 4th of December, 1732.



[illegible] her bosom fire:
How her eyes languish with desire!
How blest, how happy, should I be,
Were that fond glance bestow'd on me!
New doubts and fears within me war,
What rival's near?—a china jar.

China's the passion of her soul:
A cup, a plate, a dish, a bowl,
Can kindle wishes in her breast,
Inflame with joy, or break her rest.

Some gems collect; some medals prize,
And view the rust with lovers' eyes;
Some court the stars at midnight hours;
Some doat on Nature's charms in flowers:
But every beauty I can trace
In Laura's mind, in Laura's face;
My stars are in this brighter sphere,
My lily and my rose is here.

Philosophers, more grave than wise,
Hunt science down in butterflies;

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GAY.

EPISTLE TO A LADY ON HER PASSION FOR OLD CHINA.

What ecstacies her bosom fire!
How her eyes languish with desire!
How blest, how happy, should I be,
Were that fond glance bestow'd on me!
New doubts and fears within me war,
What rival's near?—a china jar.

China's the passion of her soul:
A cup, a plate, a dish, a bowl,
Can kindle wishes in her breast,
Inflame with joy, or break her rest.

Some gems collect; some medals prize,
And view the rust with lovers' eyes;
Some court the stars at midnight hours;
Some doat on Nature's charms in flowers:
But every beauty I can trace
In Laura's mind, in Laura's face;
My stars are in this brighter sphere,
My lily and my rose is here.

Philosophers, more grave than wise,
Hunt science down in butterflies;

Or, fondly poring on a spider,
Stretch human contemplation wider.
Fossils give joy to Galen's soul;
He digs for knowledge, like a mole;
In shells so learn'd, that all agree
No fish that swims knows more than he!
In such pursuits if wisdom lies,
Who, Laura, shall thy taste despise?

When I some antique jar behold,
Or white, or blue, or speck'd with gold;
Vessels so pure, and so refined,
Appear the types of womankind:
Are they not valued for their beauty,
Too fair, too fine, for household duty?
With flowers and gold and azure dyed,
Of every house the grace and pride?
How white, how polish'd is their skin,
And valued most when only seen!
She, who before was highest prized,
Is for a crack or flaw despised.
I grant they're frail; yet they're so rare,
The treasure cannot cost too dear!
But man is made of coarser stuff,
And serves convenience well enough;
He's a strong earthen vessel, made
For drudging, labour, toil, and trade;
And, when wives lose their other self,
With ease they bear the loss of delf.

Husbands, more covetous than sage,
Condemn this china-buying rage;
They count that woman's prudence little,
Who sets her heart on things so brittle.
But are those wise men's inclinations
Fix'd on more strong, more sure foundations?
If all that's frail we must despise,
No human view or scheme is wise.
Are not ambition's hopes as weak?
They swell like bubbles, shine, and break.
A courtier's promise is so slight,
'Tis made at noon, and broke at night.
What pleasure's sure? The Miss you keep
Breaks both your fortune and your sleep.
The man who loves a country life
Breaks all the comforts of his wife;
And, if he quit his farm and plough,
His wife in town may break her vow.

*

Love, Laura, love, while youth is warm,
For each new winter breaks a charm;
And woman 's not like china sold,
But cheaper grows in growing old;
Then quickly choose the prudent part,
Or else you break a faithful heart.

SONG: BLACK-EYED SUSAN.

All in the Downs the fleet was moor'd,
The streamers waving in the wind,
When black-eyed Susan came aboard—
Oh! where shall I my true-love find?
Tell me, ye jovial sailors, tell me true,
If my sweet William sails among the crew.

William, who high upon the yard
Rock'd with the billow to and fro,
Soon as her well-known voice he heard,
He sigh'd, and cast his eyes below:
The cord slides swiftly through his glowing hands,
And (quick as lightning) on the deck he stands.

So the sweet lark, high poised in air,
Shuts close his pinions to his breast
(If chance his mate's shrill call he hear),
And drops at once into her nest.
The noblest captain in the British fleet
Might envy William's lip those kisses sweet.

O Susan, Susan, lovely dear,
My vows shall ever true remain;
Let me kiss off that falling tear;
We only part to meet again.
Change, as ye list, ye winds; my heart shall be
The faithful compass that still points to thee.

Believe not what the landmen say,
Who tempt with doubts thy constant mind.
They 'll tell thee, sailors, when away,
In every port a mistress find:
Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee so,
For thou art present wheresoe'er I go.

If to fair India's coast we sail,
Thy eyes are seen in diamonds bright,

Thy breath is Afric's spicy gale,
Thy skin is ivory so white.
Thus every beauteous object that I view,
Wakes in my soul some charm of lovely Sue.

Though battle call me from thy arms,
Let not my pretty Susan mourn;
Though cannons roar, yet, safe from harms,
William shall to his dear return.
Love turns aside the balls that round me fly,
Lest precious tears should drop from Susan's eye.

The boatswain gave the dreadful word,
The sails their swelling bosom spread;
No longer must she stay aboard:
They kiss'd, she sigh'd, he hung his head.
Her lessening boat unwilling rows to land:
Adieu! she cries; and waved her lily hand.

DIRECTIONS FOR WALKING THE STREETS OF LONDON.

For ease and for dispatch, the morning 's best;
No tides of passengers the streets molest.
You 'll see a draggled damsel here and there,
From Billingsgate her fishy traffic bear!
On doors the sallow milk-maid chalks her gains:
Ah! how unlike the milk-maid of the plains!
Before proud gates attending asses bray,
Or arrogate with solemn pace the way;
These grave physicians with their milky cheer
The love-sick maid and dwindling beau repair;
Here rows of drummers stand in martial file,
And with their vellum thunder shake the pile,
To greet the new-made bride. Are sounds like these
The proper prelude to a state of peace?
Now industry awakes her busy sons;
Full-charged with news the breathless hawker runs:
Shops open, coaches roll, carts shake the ground,
And all the streets with passing cries resound.
If clothed in black you tread the busy town,
Or if distinguish'd by the reverend gown,
Three trades avoid; oft in the mingling press
The barber's apron soils the sable dress;
Shun the perfumer's touch with cautious eye,
Nor let the baker's step advance too nigh.

Ye walkers, too, that youthful colours wear,
Three sullying trades avoid with equal care:
The little chimney-sweeper skulks along,
And marks with sooty stains the heedless throng;
When small-coal murmurs in the hoarser throat,
From smutty dangers guard thy threaten'd coat;
The dustman's cart offends thy clothes and eyes,
When through the street a cloud of ashes flies;
But, whether black or lighter dyes are worn,
The chandler's basket, on his shoulder borne,
With tallow spots thy coat; resign the way,
To shun the surly butcher's greasy tray,
Butchers, whose hands are dyed with blood's foul stain,
And always foremost in the hangman's train.
Let due civilities be strictly paid:
The wall surrender to the hooded maid;
Nor let thy sturdy elbow's hasty rage
Jostle the feeble steps of trembling age:
And when the porter bends beneath his load,
And pants for breath, clear thou the crowded road.
But, above all, the groping blind direct;
And from the pressing throng the lame protect.
You'll sometimes meet a fop, of nicest tread,
Whose mantling peruke veils his empty head;
At every step he dreads the wall to lose,
And risks, to save a coach, his red-heel'd shoes;
Him, like the miller, pass with caution by,
Lest from his shoulder clouds of powder fly.
But when the bully, with assuming pace,
Cocks his broad hat, edged round with tarnish'd lace,
Yield not the way, defy his strutting pride,
And thrust him to the muddy kennel's side;
He never turns again, nor dares oppose,
But mutters coward curses as he goes.
If drawn by business to a street unknown,
Let the sworn porter point thee through the town;
Be sure observe the signs, for signs remain
Like faithful landmarks to the walking train.
Seek not from 'prentices to learn the way,
Those fabling boys will turn thy steps astray;
Ask the grave tradesman to direct thee right,
He ne'er deceives—but when he profits by 't.
When waggish boys the stunted besom ply
To rid the slabby pavement, pass not by
Ere thou hast held their hands; some heedless flirt
Will overspread thy calves with spattering dirt.

Where porters' hogsheads roll from carts aslope,
Or brewers down steep cellars stretch the rope,
Where counted billets are by carmen tost,
Stay thy rash step, and walk without the post.
What though the gathering mire thy feet besmear?
The voice of industry is always near.
Hark! the boy calls thee to his destined stand,
And the shoe shines beneath his oily hand.

A FABLE: THE FARMER'S WIFE AND THE RAVEN.

Why are those tears? why droops your head?
Is then your other husband dead?
Or does a worse disgrace betide?
Hath no one since his death applied?
Alas! you know the cause too well;
The salt is spilt, to me it fell;
Then, to contribute to my loss,
My knife and fork were laid across;
On Friday too! the day I dread!
Would I were safe at home in bed!
Last night (I vow to Heaven 'tis true)
Bounce from the fire a coffin flew.
Next post some fatal news shall tell:
God send my Cornish friends be well!
Unhappy Widow, cease thy tears,
Nor feel affliction in thy fears,
Let not thy stomach be suspended;
Eat now, and weep when dinner 's ended;
And, when the butler clears the table,
For thy dessert I 'll read my Fable.
Betwixt her swagging pannier's load
A Farmer's Wife to market rode,
And, jogging on, with thoughtful care,
Summ'd up the profits of her ware;
When, starting from her silver dream,
Thus far and wide was heard her scream:
"That Raven on yon left hand oak
(Curse on his ill-betiding croak!)
Bodes me no good." No more she said,
When poor blind Ball, with stumbling tread,
Fell prone; o'erturn'd the pannier lay,
And her mash'd eggs bestrow'd the way.
She, sprawling in the yellow road,
Rail'd, swore, and cursed. "Thou croaking toad,

A murrain take thy whoreson throat!
I knew misfortune in the note."
"Dame," quoth the Raven, "spare your oaths,
Unclench your fist, and wipe your clothes.
But why on me those curses thrown?
Goody, the fault was all your own;
For, had you laid this brittle ware
On Dun, the old sure-footed mare,
Though all the ravens of the hundred
With croaking had your tongue out-thunder'd,
Sure-footed Dun had kept her legs,
And you, good woman, saved your eggs."

TO MY NATIVE COUNTRY.

Hail, happy land! whose fertile grounds
The liquid fence of Neptune bounds;
By bounteous Nature set apart,
The seat of industry and art!
O Britain! chosen port of trade,
May luxury ne'er thy sons invade!
May never minister (intent
His private treasures to augment)
Corrupt thy state! If jealous foes
Thy rights of commerce dare oppose,
Shall not thy fleets their rapine awe?
Who is't prescribes the ocean law?
Whenever neighbouring states contend,
'Tis thine to be the general friend.
What is't who rules in other lands?
On trade alone thy glory stands;
That benefit is unconfined,
Diffusing good among mankind:
That first gave lustre to thy reigns,
And scatter'd plenty o'er thy plains:
'Tis that alone thy wealth supplies,
And draws all Europe's envious eyes.
Be commerce, then, thy sole design;
Keep that, and all the world is thine.

THE SPELL.

Hobnelia, seated in a dreary vale,
In pensive mood rehearsed her piteous tale;

Her piteous tale the winds in sighs bemoan,
And pining Echo answers groan for groan.

I rue the day, a rueful day I trow,
The woful day, a day indeed of woe;
When Lubberkin to town his cattle drove,
A maiden fine bedight he hapt to love;
The maiden fine bedight his love retains,
And for the village he forsakes the plains.
Return, my Lubberkin, these ditties hear;
Spells will I try, and spells shall ease my care.
"With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around."

When first the year I heard the cuckoo sing,
And call with welcome note the budding spring,
I straightway set a-running with such haste,
Deborah that won the smock scarce ran so fast;
Till spent for lack of breath, quite weary grown,
Upon a rising bank I sat adown,
Then doff'd my shoe, and, by my troth, I swear,
Therein I spied this yellow frizzled hair,
As like to Lubberkin's in curl and hue,
As if upon his comely pate it grew.
"With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around."

At eve last Midsummer no sleep I sought,
But to the field a bag of hemp-seed brought;
I scatter'd round the seed on every side,
And three times in a trembling accent cried,
"This hemp-seed with my virgin hand I sow,
Who shall my true-love be the crop shall mow."
I straight look'd back, and, if my eyes speak truth,
With his keen scythe behind me came the youth.
"With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around."

Last Valentine, the day when birds of kind
Their paramours with mutual chirpings find;
I early rose, just at the break of day,
Before the sun had chased the stars away;
A-field I went, amid the morning dew
To milk my kine (for so should housewives do);
Thee first I spied; and the first swain we see,
In spite of fortune, shall our true-love be.
See, Lubberkin, each bird his partner take;
And canst thou then thy sweetheart dear forsake?
"With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around."

Last May-day fair I search'd to find a snail,
That might my secret lover's name reveal.
Upon a gooseberry-bush a snail I found
(For always snails near sweetest fruit abound).
I seized the vermin, whom I quickly sped,
And on the earth the milk-white embers spread.
Slow crawl'd the snail, and, if I right can spell,
In the soft ashes mark'd a curious *L*;
Oh, may this wondrous omen lucky prove!
For *L* is found in Lubberkin and Love.
"With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around."

Two hazel nuts I threw into the flame,
And to each nut I gave a sweetheart's name;
This with the loudest bounce me sore amazed,
That in a flame of brightest colour blazed.
As blazed the nut, so may thy passion grow;
For 'twas thy nut that did so brightly glow.
"With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around."

As peascods once I pluck'd, I chanced to see
One that was closely fill'd with three times three,
Which when I cropp'd I safely home convey'd,
And o'er the door the spell in secret laid;
My wheel I turn'd, and sang a ballad new,
While from the spindle I the fleeces drew;
The latch moved up, when, who should first come in,
But, in his proper person—Lubberkin.
I broke my yarn, surprised the sight to see;
Sure sign that he would break his word with me.
Eftsoons I join'd it with my wonted sleight:
So may again his love with mine unite!
"With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around."

This Lady-fly I take from off the grass,
Whose spotted back might scarlet red surpass;
"Fly, Lady-bird, north, south, or east, or west,
Fly where the man is found that I love best."
He leaves my hand; see, to the west he's flown,
To call my true-love from the faithless town.
"With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around."

I pare this pippin round and round again,
My shepherd's name to flourish on the plain,
I fling th' unbroken paring o'er my head,
Upon the grass a perfect *L* is read;

Yet on my heart a fairer *L* is seen
Than what the paring makes upon the green.
"With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around."

This pippin shall another trial make,
See from the core two kernels brown I take;
This on my cheek for Lubberkin is worn;
And Boobyclod on t' other side is borne.
But Boobyclod soon drops upon the ground,
A certain token that his love's unsound;
While Lubberkin sticks firmly to the last:
Oh were his lips to mine but join'd so fast!
"With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around."

As Lubberkin once slept beneath a tree,
I twitch'd his dangling garter from his knee.
He wist not when the hempen string I drew.
Now mine I quickly doff, of inkle blue.
Together fast I tie the garters twain;
And while I knit the knot repeat this strain:
"Three times a true-love's knot I tie secure,
Firm be the knot, firm may his love endure!"
"With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around."

As I was wont, I trudged last market-day
To town, with new-laid eggs preserved in hay.
I made my market long before 'twas night,
My purse grew heavy, and my basket light.
Straight to the 'pothecary's shop I went,
And in love-powder all my money spent.
Behap what will, next Sunday after prayers,
When to the ale-house Lubberkin repairs,
These golden flies into his mug I'll throw,
And soon the swain with fervent love shall glow.
"With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around."

But hold—our Lightfoot barks, and cocks his ears,
O'er yonder stile see Lubberkin appears.
He comes! he comes! Hobnelia 's not bewray'd,
Nor shall she crown'd with willow die a maid.
He vows, he swears, he'll give me a green gown:
Oh dear! I fall adown, adown, adown!

This national poet and favourite of Scotland, was born at Crawford Moor, Lanarkshire, in 1686. His father was only an humble miner, and in this occupation the poet himself continued until he was fifteen years old, when he apprenticed himself to a wig-maker in Edinburgh. He had, however, acquired such a love of literature, that when his apprenticeship expired he became a bookseller, and opened the first Circulating Library that had been attempted in Scotland. He afterwards fitted up a theatre in Edinburgh, to the great indignation of the sober citizens, who designated the house a Synagogue of Satan. He lived to a good old age, and died in 1758.

The poems of Ramsay, which are numerous, were published in small tracts as they were composed for popular circulation, and their currency among the common people was similar to that of the Spectator among the better classes of the English, so that his verses became household words, and he was spoken of under the endearing appellation of "honest Allan." But of all his works his Gentle Shepherd is the best. In this admirable production he has not only exhibited the choicest specimen of pastoral poetry, but of truth and nature also—limitations to which no pastoral poet had hitherto been so hardy as to confine himself. In The Gentle Shepherd, therefore, we have no enchanted scenery, peopled by Utopian inhabitants—no Pans, Nymphs, and Satyrs—no shepherds bleating over dying lambs, or shepherdesses rustling in silk and satin. Instead of this, we have a Scottish spring with all its changes of rain, mist, and sunshine, and Scottish scenery diversified with hill and dale, broom and heath, inhabited by swains who keep sheep and make love equally in earnest, and calculate with national prudence amidst their courtship about the *plenishin'* of a house, and provision for the future family. But this very truthfulness constitutes the great charm, as well as the moral effect of the work, so that it continues to enjoy at the present day an undiminished popularity, among every class in Scotland.

RUSTIC COQUETTES.

Daft gowk! leave aff that silly whingeing way;
Seem careless—there's my hand ye'll win the day.
Hear how I served my lass I loe as weel
As ye do Jenny, and wi' heart as leal.
Last morning I was gye and early out,
Upon a dyke I lean'd, glow'ring about;
I saw my Meg come linkin' o'er the lee;
I saw my Meg, but Meggy saw nae me—
For yet the sun was wading thro' the mist,
And she was close upon me ere she wist—
Her coats were kiltit, and did sweetly shaw
Her straught bare legs, that whiter were than snaw.
Her cockernony snooded up fu' sleek,
Her haffet-locks hang waving on her cheek;
Her cheeks sae ruddy, and her een sae clear;
And O! her mouth's like ony hinny pear.
Neat, neat she was, in bustine waistcoat clean,
As she cam skiffing o'er the dewy green:

Blythesome, I cried "My bonny Meg, come here,
I ferly wherefore ye're sae soon asteer;
But I can guess—ye're gawn to gather dew."
She scour'd awa, and said, "What's that to you?"
"Then fare ye weel, Meg Dorts, and e'en's ye like,"
I careless cried, and lap in o'er the dyke.
I trow, when that she saw, within a crack,
She cam wi' a right thieveless errand back;
Misca'd me first, then bade me hound my dog,
To wear up three waff ewes stray'd on the bog.
I leugh, and sae did she; then wi' great haste
I clasp'd my arms about her neck and waist,—
About her yielding waist, and took a fouth
O' sweetest kisses frae her glowing mouth.
While hard and fast I held her in my grips,
My very saul came louping to my lips.
Sair, sair she flet wi' me 'tween ilka smack,
But weel I kend she meant nae as she spak.
Dear Roger, when your jo puts on her gloom,
Do ye sae too, and never fash your thoom—
Seem to forsake her, soon she'll change her mood;
Gae woo anither, and she'll gang clean wud.

From The Gentle Shepherd.

DEFENCE OF MATRIMONY.

Peggy. Yes, it's a heartsome thing to be a wife,
When round the ingle-edge young sprouts are rife.
Gif I'm sae happy, I shall hae delight
To hear their little plaints, and keep them right.
Wow! Jenny, can there greater pleasure be,
Than see sic wee tots toolying at your knee;
When a' they ettle at—their greatest wish,
Is to be made o', and obtain a kiss?
Can there be toil in tenting day and night
The like o' them, when love maks care delight?

Jenny. But poortith, Peggy, is the warst o' a';
Gif o'er your heads ill-chance should begg'ry draw,
But little love or canty cheer can come
Frae duddy doublets, and a pantry toom.
Your nowt may die—the spate may bear away
Frae aff the howms your dainty rucks o' hay.
The thick-blawn wreaths o' snaw, or blashy thows,
May smoor your wathers, and may rot your ewes.

A dyvour buys your butter, woo, and cheese,
But, or the day o' payment, breaks, and flees.
Wi' gloomin' brow, the laird seeks in his rent;
It's no to gie; your merchant 's to the bent.
His honour maunna want—he poinds your gear;
Syne, driven frae house and hald, where will ye steer?
Dear Meg, be wise, and live a single life;
Troth, it's nae mows to be a married wife.

Peggy. May sic ill luck befa' that silly she
Wha has sic fears, for that was never me.
Let fouk bode weel, and strive to do their best;
Nae mair's required; let Heaven mak out the rest.
I've heard my honest uncle aften say,
That lads should a' for wives that's virtuous pray;
For the maist thrifty man could never get
A weel-stored room, unless his wife wad let:
Wherefore nocht shall be wanting on my part,
To gather wealth to raise my shepherd's heart:
Whate'er he wins, I 'll guide wi' canny care,
And win the vogue at market, tron, or fair,
For halesome, clean, cheap, and sufficient ware.
A flock o' lambs, cheese, butter, and some woo,
Shall first be sald to pay the laird his due;
Syne a' behind 's our ain. Thus, without fear,
Wi' love and rowth, we thro' the warld will steer;
And when my Pate in bairns and gear grows rife,
He 'll bless the day he gat me for his wife.

Jenny. But what if some young giglet on the green,
Wi' dimpled cheeks and twa bewitching een,
Shou'd gar your Patie think his half-worn Meg,
And her ken'd kisses, hardly worth a feg?

Peggy. Nae mair o' that—Dear Jenny, to be free,
There 's some men constanter in love than we:
Nor is the ferly great, when nature kind
Has blest them wi' solidity o' mind.
They 'll reason calmly, and wi' kindness smile,
When our short passions wad our peace beguile:
Sae, whensoe'er they slight their maiks at hame,
It's ten to ane the wives are maist to blame.
Then I'll employ wi' pleasure a' my art
To keep him cheerfu', and secure his heart.
At e'en, when he comes weary frae the hill,
I'll hae a' things made ready to his will.
In winter, when he toils thro' wind and rain,
A bleezing ingle, and a clean hearth-stane;
And soon as he flings by his plaid and staff,
The seething pat's be ready to tak aff;

Clean hag-a-bag I 'll spread upon his board,
And serve him wi' the best we can afford;
Good humour and white bigonets shall be
Guards to my face, to keep his love for me.

From The Gentle Shepherd.

MIDNIGHT ASSIGNATION WITH A WITCH.

——— Ah! Sir, the witch ca'd Mause,
That wins aboon the mill amang the haws,
First promised that she'd help me, wi' her art,
To gain a bonny thrawart lassie's heart.
As she had trysted, I met wi'er this night;
But may nae friend o' mine get sic a fright!
For the curst hag, instead o' doing me guid,
(The very thought o't's like to freeze my bluid!)
Raised up a ghaist, or deil, I kenna whilk,
Like a dead corse, in sheet as white as milk:
Black hands it had, and face as wan as death;
Upon me fast the witch and it fell baith,
And gat me down; while I, like a great fool,
Was labour'd as I used to be at school.
My heart out o' it's hool was like to loup,
I pithless grew wi' fear, and had nae houp,
Till, wi' an elritch laugh, they vanish'd quite;
Syne I, hauf dead wi' anger, fear, and spite,
Crap up, and fled straught frae them, Sir, to you,
Houping your help to gie the deil his due.
I'm sure my heart will ne'er gie o'er to dunt,
Till, in a fat tar-barrel, Mause be brunt.

From The Gentle Shepherd.

IN PRAISE OF THE PLAID.

O first of garbs! garment of happy fate!
So long employ'd, of such an antique date;
Look back some thousand years, till records fail,
And lose themselves in some romantic tale,
We 'll find our godlike fathers nobly scorn'd
To be with any other dress adorn'd;
Before base foreign fashions interwove,
Which 'gainst their int'rest and their bravery strove.

'Twas they could boast their freedom with proud Rome,
And, arm'd in steel, despise the senate's doom:
Whilst o'er the globe their eagle they display'd,
And conquer'd nations prostrate homage paid,
They, only they, unconquer'd stood their ground,
And to the mighty empire fix'd the bound.
Our native prince who then supplied the throne,
In Plaid array'd, magnificently shone;
Nor seem'd his purple, or his ermine less,
Though cover'd by the Caledonian dress.
In this at court the thanes were gaily clad;
With this the shepherds and the hynds were glad;
In this the warrior wrapp'd his brawny arms;
With this our beauteous mothers veil'd their charms;
When ev'ry youth, and ev'ry lovely maid,
Deem'd it a *dishabille* to want their Plaid.
O heav'ns, how changed! how little look their race,
When foreign chains with foreign modes take place;
When East and Western Indies must combine
To deck the fop, and make the gewgaw shine!
Thus, while the Grecian troops in Persia lay,
And learn'd the habit to be soft and gay,
By luxury enerved, they lost the day.
I ask'd Varell, what soldiers he thought best?
And thus he answer'd to my plain request:
"Were I to lead battalions out to war,
And hoped to triumph in the victor's car,
To gain the loud applause of worthy fame,
And columns raised to eternise my name,
I'd choose (had I my choice) that hardy race
Who fearless can look terrors in the face;
Who, 'midst the snows, the best of limbs can fold
In Tartan Plaids, and smile at chilling cold:
No useless trash should pain my soldiers' back,
Nor canvas-tents make loaden axles crack;
No rattling silks I'd to my standards bind,
But bright Tartanus waving in the wind:
The Plaid alone should all my ensigns be,
This army from such banners would not flee.
These, these were they, who naked taught the way
To fight with art, and boldly gain the day!
Ev'n great Gustavus stood himself amazed,
While at their wondrous skill and force he gazed.
With such brave troops one might o'er Europe run,
Make out what Rich'lieu framed, and Louis had begun.

From Tartana

HORACE TO VIRGIL, ON HIS TAKING A VOYAGE TO ATHENS.

O Cyprian goddess, twinkle clear,
And Helen's brithers aye appear;
Ye stars wha shed a lucky light,
Auspicious aye keep in-a sight;
King Eol, grant a tydie tirl,
But boast the blast that rudely whirl:
Dear ship, be canny wi' your care,
At Athens land my Virgil fair,
Syne soon and safe, baith lith and spaul,
Bring hame the tae hauf o' my saul.
Daring and unco stout he was,
Wi' heart hool'd in three sloughs o' brass,
Wha ventured first on the rough sea,
Wi' hempen branks, and horse o' tree:
Wha in the weak machine durst ride
Thro' tempests, and a rairing tide;
Nor clinty craigs, nor hurricane,
That drives the Adriatic main,
And gars the ocean gowl and quake,
Could e'er a soul sae sturdy shake.
The man wha could sic rubs win ower,
Without a wink at death might glow'r,
Wha unconcern'd can tak his sleep
Amang the monsters o' the deep.
Jove vainly twin'd the sea and eard,
Since mariners are not afraid,
Wi' laws o' nature to dispense,
And impiously treat Providence.
Audacious men at nought will stand,
When vicious passions hae command.
Prometheus ventured up, and staw
A lowin' coal frae heav'n's high ha;
Unsonsy thift, which fevers brought
In bikes, which fouk like sybows hought:
Then death erst slaw began to ling,
And fast as haps to dart his sting.
Neist Dedalus must contradict
Nature forsooth, and feathers stick
Upon his back, syne upward streek,
And in at Jove's high winnocks keek,
While Hercules, wi 's timmer mell,
Plays rap upo' the yates o' hell.
What is 't man winna ettle at?
E'en wi' the gods he 'll bell the cat:

Tho' Jove be very laith to kill,
They winna let his bowt lie still.

THE TWA BOOKS: A FABLE.

Twa books, near neighbours in a shop,
The tane a gilded Turkey fop,
The tither's face was weather-beaten,
And cauf-skin jacket, sair worm-eaten.
The corky, proud o' his braw suit,
Curl'd up his nose, and thus cried out:—
"Ah! place me on some fresher binks:
Figh! how this mouldy creature stinks!
How can a gentle book like me
Endure sic scoundrel company?
What may fouk say, to see me cling
Sae close to this auld ugly thing,
But that I'm of a simple spirit,
And disregard my proper merit?"
Quoth grey-beard, "Whisht, sir, wi' your din;
For a' your meritorious skin,
I doubt if ye be worth within:
For as auld-fashion'd as I look,
May be I am the better book."
"O heav'ns! I canna thole the clash
O' this impertinent auld hash;
I winna stay ae moment langer."
"My lord, please to command your anger;
Pray only let me tell you that"——
"What wad this insolent be at?
Rot out your tongue—pray, Master Symmer,
Remove me frae this dinsome rhymer:
If you regard your reputation,
And us o' a distinguish'd station.
Hence frae this beast let me be hurried,
For wi' his stour and stink I'm worried."
Scarce had he shook his paughty crap,
When in a customer did pap;
He up douse Stanza lifts, and eyes him,
Turns o'er his leaves, admires, and buys him;
"This book," said he, "is guid and scarce,
The saul o' sense in sweetest verse."
But reading title o' gilt cleathing,
Cries, "Gods! wha buys this bonny naithing?
Nought duller e'er was put in print:
Wow! what a deal o' Turkey's tint!"

This physician and poet was born in Yorkshire, of a good family, but the year of his birth cannot be ascertained. He studied at Peter House, Cambridge, and became a Doctor of Medicine in 1691. His popularity and practice soon became extensive, and he was distinguished in his profession, not only for medical skill, but benevolence and humanity. His principal poem, The Dispensary, which is an obvious imitation of the Lutrin of Boileau, originated in the following cause. In 1687, the College of Physicians had published an edict, by which all the fellows, candidates, and licentiates, were required to give gratuitous medical advice to the neighbouring poor. This was done; but, after a year's trial, the benevolent design was almost frustrated by the high price of drugs and the avarice of the apothecaries—upon which the college took the superintendence of poor patients into their own hands. The apothecaries, who thus found that their craft was in danger, made loud and violent remonstrances, but the cause of their adversaries was popular, and the physicians triumphed. Garth eagerly entered the lists against the venders of medicine, by his poem of The Dispensary, and the victory of his brethren was complete. Much of the wit of this poem was of a temporary nature, as it referred to individuals, and has therefore lost its force; and indeed The Dispensary, notwithstanding the important effects it produced in its own day, is now universally neglected. Garth lived in friendly union and esteem with Pope, Addison, Granville, and the principal authors of the age; and, on the accession of George I., he was honoured with knighthood. He died January 11, 1718.

EVENING.

The evening now with blushes warms the air,
The steer resigns the yoke, the hind his care.
The clouds above with golden edgings glow,
And falling dews refresh the earth below.
The bat with sooty wings flits through the grove,
The reeds scarce rustle, nor the aspens move,
And all the feather'd folks forbear their lays of love.
Through the transparent region of the skies,
Swift as a wish, the missionary flies:
With wonder he surveys the upper air,
And the gay gilded meteors sporting there;
How lambent jellies, kindling in the night,
Shoot through the ether in a trail of light;
How rising steams in th' azure fluid blend,
Or fleet in clouds, or soft in showers descend;
Or, if the stubborn rage of cold prevail,
In flakes they fly, or fall in moulded hail;
How honey-dews embalm the fragrant morn,
And the fair oak with luscious sweats adorn;
How heat and moisture mingle in a mass,
Or belch in thunder, or in lightning blaze;
Why nimble corruscations strike the eye,
And bold tornados bluster in the sky;

Why a prolific Aura upwards tends,
Ferments, and in a living shower descends;
How vapours hanging on the towering hills
In breezes sigh, or weep in warbling rills;
Whence infant winds their tender pinions try,
And river gods their thirsty urns supply.
The wondering sage pursues his airy flight,
And braves the chill unwholesome damps of night:
He views the tracts where luminaries rove,
To settle seasons here, and fates above;
The bleak Arcturus still forbid the seas,
The stormy Kids, the weeping Hyades;
The shining Lyre with strains attracting more
Heaven's glittering mansions now than Hell's before;
Glad Cassiopeia circling in the sky,
And each fair Churchill of the galaxy.

From The Dispensary: Canto IV.

THE REGIONS OF DISEASE.

And now the goddess with her charge descends,
Whilst scarce one cheerful glimpse their steps befriends.
Here his forsaken seat old Chaos keeps;
And, undisturb'd by form, in silence sleeps:
A grisly wight, and hideous to the eye,
An awkward lump of shapeless anarchy.
With sordid age his features are defaced;
His lands unpeopled, and his countries waste.
To these dark realms much learned lumber creeps,
There copious Morton safe in silence sleeps;
Where mushroom libels in oblivion lie,
And, soon as born, like other monsters, die.
Upon a couch of jet, in these abodes,
Dull Night, his melancholy consort, nods.
No ways and means their cabinet employ;
But their dark hours they waste in barren joy.
Nigh this recess, with terror they survey
Where Death maintains his dread tyrannic sway.
In the close covert of a cypress grove,
Where goblins frisk, and airy spectres rove,
Yawns a dark cave, with awful horror wide,
And there the monarch's triumphs are descried;

Confused, and wildly huddled to the eye,
The beggar's pouch and prince's purple lie;
Dim lamps with sickly rays scarce seem to glow;
Sighs heave in mournful moans, and tears o'erflow;
Restless Anxiety, forlorn Despair,
And all the faded family of Care;
Old mouldering urns, racks, daggers, and distress,
Make up the frightful horror of the place.
Within its dreadful jaws those furies wait,
Which execute the harsh decrees of Fate.
Febris is first: the hag relentless hears
The virgin's sighs, and sees the infant's tears.
In her parch'd eyeballs fiery meteors reign;
And restless ferments revel in each vein.
Then Hydrops next appears amongst the throng;
Bloated, and big, she slowly sails along.
But, like a miser, in excess she 's poor,
And pines for thirst amidst her watery store.
Now loathsome Lepra, that offensive sprite,
With foul eruptions stain'd, offends the sight;
Still deaf to Beauty's soft persuading power;
Nor can bright Hebe's charms her bloom secure.
Whilst meagre Pthisis gives a silent blow,
Her strokes are sure, but her advances slow:
No loud alarms, nor fierce assaults, are shown:
She starves the fortress first, then takes the town.
Behind stood crowds of much inferior fame,
Too numerous to repeat, too foul to name;
The vassals of their monarch's tyranny,
Who, at his nod, on fatal errands fly.

From The Dispensary: Canto VI.

TO THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH, ON HIS VOLUNTARY BANISHMENT.

Go, mighty prince, and those great nations see,
Which thy victorious arms before made free;
View that famed column, where thy name engraved
Shall tell their children who their empire saved;
Point out that marble where thy worth is shown,
To every grateful country but thy own.
O censure undeserved! unequal fate!
Which strove to lessen him who made her great:
Which, pamper'd with success and rich in fame,
Extoll'd his conquests, but condemn'd his name.

But virtue is a crime when placed on high,
Though all the fault's in the beholder's eye;
Yet he, untouch'd, as in the heat of wars,
Flies from no danger but domestic jars,
Smiles at the dart which angry Envy shakes,
And only fears for Her whom he forsakes:
He grieves to find the course of virtue cross'd,
Blushing to see our blood no better lost;
Disdains in factious parties to contend,
And proves in absence most Britannia's friend.
So the great Scipio of old, to shun
That glorious envy which his arms had won,
Far from his dear, ungrateful Rome retired,
Prepared, whene'er his country's cause required,
To shine in peace or war, and be again admired.

ON THE STATUE OF QUEEN ANNE IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

Near the vast bulk of that stupendous frame,
Known by the Gentiles' great apostle's name;
With grace divine, great Anna's seen to rise,
An awful form that glads a nation's eyes;
Beneath her feet four mighty realms appear,
And with due reverence pay their homage there:
Britain and Ireland seem to own her grace,
And even wild India wears a smiling face.
But France alone with downcast eyes is seen,
The sad attendant of so good a Queen:
Ungrateful country! to forget so soon,
All that great Anna for thy sake has done:
When sworn the kind defender of thy cause,
Spite of her dear religion, spite of laws,
For thee she sheath'd the terrors of her sword,
For thee she broke her General—and her word:
For thee her mind in doubtful terms she told,
And learn'd to speak like oracles of old.
For thee, for thee alone, what could she more?
She lost the honour she had gain'd before;
Lost all the trophies which her arms had won
(Such Cæsar never knew, nor Philip's son);
Resign'd the glories of a ten years' reign,
And such as none but Marlborough's arm could gain.
For thee in annals she 's content to shine,
Like other monarchs of the Stuart line.

THIS eminent literary personage, whose name occurs so frequently in the memoirs of the wits of the eighteenth century, was born in 1685. Although his circumstances were comparatively narrow, his life and means were devoted to the patronage of unfortunate genius, and the promotion of schemes of public benevolence, and he seems to have enjoyed the esteem of all his contemporaries except Pope, who meanly libelled him, and then as meanly apologised. After a life of honour and usefulness, he died in 1750.

ALEXIS; OR, POPE.

Tuneful Alexis, on the Thames' fair side,
The ladies' plaything, and the Muses' pride;
With merit popular, with wit polite;
Easy though vain; and elegant though light;
Desiring and deserving others' praise,
Poorly accepts a fame he ne'er repays;
Unborn to cherish, sneakingly approves,
And wants the soul to spread the worth he loves.
This, to the juniors of his tribe, gave pain,
For mean minds praise but to be praised again.
Henceforth, renouncing an ungracious Baal,
His altars smoke not, and their offerings fail:
The heat his scorn had raised, his pride inflamed,
Till what they worshipp'd first they next defamed.

VERSES WRITTEN WHEN ALONE IN AN INN AT SOUTHAMPTON.

Twenty lost years have stolen their hours away,
Since in this inn, even in this room, I lay:
How changed! what then was rapture, fire, and air,
Seems now sad silence all and blank despair!
Is it that youth paints every view too bright,
And, life advancing, fancy fades her light?
Ah, no!—nor yet is day so far declined,
Nor can time's creeping coldness reach the mind.
'Tis that I miss th' inspirer of that youth;
Her, whose soft smile was love, whose soul was truth.
Her, from whose pain I never wish'd relief,
And for whose pleasure I could smile at grief.
Prospects that, view'd with her, inspired before,
Now seen without her can delight no more.

Death snatch'd my joys, by cutting off her share,
But left her griefs to multiply my care.
Pensive and cold this room in each changed part
I view, and, shock'd, from every object start:
There hung the watch, that, beating hours from day,
Told its sweet owner's lessening life away.
There her dear diamond taught the sash my name;
'Tis gone! frail image of love, life, and fame.
That glass she dress'd at, keeps her form no more;
Not one dear footstep tunes th' unconscious floor.
There sat she—yet those chairs no sense retain,
And busy recollection smarts in vain.
Sullen and dim, what faded scenes are here!
I wonder, and retract a starting tear;
Gaze in attentive doubt—with anguish swell,
And o'er and o'er on each weigh'd object dwell:
Then to the window rush, gay views invite,
And tempt idea to permit delight;
But unimpressive, all in sorrow drown'd,
One void forgetful desert glooms around.
Oh life!—deceitful lure of lost desires!
How short thy period, yet how fierce thy fires!
Scarce can a passion start (we change so fast),
Ere new lights strike us, and the old are past.
Schemes following schemes, so long life's taste explore,
That ere we learn to live, we live no more.
Who then can think—yet sigh, to part with breath,
Or shun the healing hand of friendly death?
Guilt, penitence, and wrongs, and pain, and strife,
Form the whole heap'd amount, thou flatterer, life!
Is it for this, that toss'd 'twixt hope and fear,
Peace, by new shipwrecks, numbers each new year?
Oh take me, death! indulge desired repose,
And draw thy silent curtain round my woes.
Yet hold—one tender pang revokes that pray'r,
Still there remains one claim to tax my care.
Gone though she is, she left her soul behind,
In four dear transcripts of her copied mind.
They chain me down to life, new task supply,
And leave me not at leisure yet to die!
Busied for them I yet forego release,
And teach my wearied heart to wait for peace.
But when their day breaks broad, I welcome night,
Smile at discharge from care, and shut out light.

THOMAS WARTON, usually called the Elder, to distinguish him from his more illustrious son, was born in 1687. He was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, and on taking orders became vicar of Basingstoke and Cobham. Such was his reputation for taste and critical excellence, that he was twice chosen Professor of Poetry. He died in 1745.

AN AMERICAN LOVE ODE.

Stay, stay, thou lovely, fearful snake,
Nor hide thee in yon darksome brake;
But let me oft thy charms review,
Thy glittering scales, and golden hue;
From these a chaplet shall be wove,
To grace the youth I dearest love.

Then ages hence, when thou no more,
Shalt creep along the sunny shore,
Thy copied beauties shall be seen;
Thy red and azure mix'd with green,
In mimic folds thou shalt display:—
Stay, lovely, fearful adder, stay.

VERSES WRITTEN AFTER SEEING WINDSOR CASTLE.

From beauteous Windsor's high and storied halls,
Where Edward's chiefs start from the glowing walls,
To my low cot, from ivory beds of state,
Pleased I return, unenvious of the great.
So the bee ranges o'er the varied scenes
Of corn, of heaths, of fallows, and of greens,
Pervades the thicket, soars above the hill,
Or murmurs to the meadow's murmuring rill;
Now haunts old hollow'd oaks, deserted cells,
Now seeks the low vale-lily's silver bells;
Sips the warm fragrance of the greenhouse bowers,
And tastes the myrtle and the citron flowers;
At length returning to the wonted comb,
Prefers to all his little straw-built home.

RETIREMENT. AN ODE.

On beds of daisies idly laid,
The willow waving o'er my head,
Now morning, on the bending stem,
Hangs the round and glittering gem;
Lull'd by the lapse of yonder spring,
Of Nature's various charms I sing:
Ambition, pride, and pomp, adieu,
For what has joy to do with you?

Joy, rose-lipt dryad, loves to dwell
In sunny field or mossy cell;
Delights on echoing hills to hear
The reaper's song, or lowing steer;
Or view, with tenfold plenty spread,
The crowded corn-field, blooming mead;
While beauty, health, and innocence,
Transport the eye, the soul, the sense.

Not fresco'd roofs, not beds of state,
Not guards that round a monarch wait;
Not crowds of flatterers can scare,
From loftiest courts, intruding Care.
'Midst odours, splendours, banquets, wine,
While minstrels sound, while tapers shine,
In sable stole sad Care will come,
And darken the sad drawing-room.

Nymphs of the groves, in green array'd,
Conduct me to your thickest shade;
Deep in the bosom of the vale,
Where haunts the lonesome nightingale;
Where Contemplation, maid divine,
Leans against some aged pine,
Wrapt in solemn thought profound,
Her eyes fix'd stedfast on the ground.

Oh, virtue's nurse, retired queen,
By saints alone and hermits seen,
Beyond vain mortal wishes wise,
Teach me St. James's to despise;
For what are crowded courts, but schools
For fops, or hospitals for fools;
Where slaves and madmen, young and old,
Meet to adore some calf of gold?

This ardent lover and eloquent eulogist of field sports, was born in 1692, and possessed a patrimonial estate in Warwickshire, worth 1,500*l.* per annum. He was educated at Winchester, and subsequently at New College, Oxford; after which he settled upon his property, and distinguished himself as a skilful and enthusiastic sportsman. Unfortunately, however, his exertions in the field were followed by excesses at the table, and his fortune was at length wasted by a course of reckless hospitality. This loss, and the embarrassments that ensued, only drove him more deeply into fatal habits of intemperance, by which his misery was completed, and his end accelerated. He died in 1742. Although he wrote several poems, distinguished for wit and elegance, they are almost forgotten in the superior merits of The Chase, which was written when age had matured his mind, and practice improved his versification.

HARE HUNTING.

Hail, gentle dawn! mild blushing goddess, hail!
Rejoiced I see thy purple mantle spread
O'er half the skies, gems pave thy radiant way,
And orient pearls from every shrub depend.
Farewell, Cleora; here deep sunk in down
Slumber secure, with happy dreams amused,
Till grateful steams shall tempt thee to receive
Thy early meal; or thy officious maids,
Thy toilet placed, shall urge thee to perform
Th' important work. Me other joys invite;
The horn sonorous calls, the pack awaked
Their matins chant, nor brook my long delay.
My courser hears their voice; see there, with ears
And tail erect, neighing he paws the ground;
Fierce rapture kindles in his reddening eyes,
And boils in every vein. As captive boys
Cow'd by the ruling rod and haughty frowns
Of pedagogues severe, from their hard tasks
If once dismiss'd, no limits can contain
The tumult raised within their little breasts,
But give a loose to all their frolic play:
So from their kennel rush the joyous pack;
A thousand wanton gaieties express
Their inward ecstacy, their pleasing sport
Once more indulged, and liberty restored.
The rising sun, that o'er th' horizon peeps,
As many colours from their glossy skins
Beaming reflects, as paint the various bow
When April showers descend. Delightful scene!
Where all around is gay, men, horses, dogs,

And in each smiling countenance appears
Fresh blooming health, and universal joy.
Huntsman, lead on! behind, the clustering pack
Submiss attend, hear with respect thy whip
Loud clanging, and thy harsher voice obey:
Spare not the straggling cur that wildly roves;
But let thy brisk assistant on his back
Imprint thy just resentments; let each lash
Bite to the quick, till howling he return,
And whining creep amid the trembling crowd.
Here on this verdant spot, where Nature kind
With double blessings crowns the farmer's hopes;
Where flowers autumnal spring, and the rank mead
Affords the wandering hares a rich repast;
Throw off thy ready pack. See, where they spread,
And range around, and dash the glittering dew.
If some staunch hound, with his authentic voice,
Avow the recent trail, the justling tribe
Attend his call, then with one mutual cry,
The welcome news confirm, and echoing hills
Repeat the pleasing tale. See how they thread
The brakes, and up yon furrow drive along!
But quick they back recoil, and wisely check
Their eager haste; then o'er the fallow'd ground
How leisurely they work, and many a pause
Th' harmonious concert breaks; till more assured
With joy redoubled the low valleys ring.
What artful labyrinths perplex their way!
Ah! there she lies; how close! she pants, she doubts
If now she lives; she trembles as she sits,
With horror seized. The wither'd grass that clings
Around her head, of the same russet hue
Almost deceived my sight, had not her eyes
With life full beaming her vain wiles betray'd.
At distance draw thy pack, let all be hush'd,
No clamour loud, no frantic joy, be heard,
Lest the wild hound run gadding o'er the plain
Untractable, nor hear thy chiding voice.
Now gently put her off; see how direct
To her known mew she flies! Here, huntsman, bring
(But without hurry) all thy jolly hounds,
And calmly lay them in. How low they stoop,
And seem to plough the ground! then all at once
With greedy nostrils snuff the fuming steam
That glads their fluttering hearts. As winds let loose
From the dark caverns of the blustering god,
They burst away, and sweep the dewy lawn.

Hope gives them wings while she's spurr'd on by fear.
The welkin rings; men, dogs, hills, rocks, and woods,
In the full concert join. Now, my brave youths,
Stripp'd for the chase, give all your souls to joy!
See how their coursers, than the mountain roe
More fleet, the verdant carpet skim, thick clouds
Snorting they breathe, their shining hoofs scarce print
The grass unbruised; with emulation fired
They strain to lead the field, top the barr'd gate,
O'er the deep ditch exulting bound, and brush
The thorny-twining hedge: The riders bend
O'er their arch'd necks; with steady hands, by turns
Indulge their speed, or moderate their rage.
Where are their sorrows, disappointments, wrongs,
Vexations, sickness, cares? All, all are gone,
And with the panting winds lag far behind.
Huntsman! her gait observe; if in wide rings
She wheel her mazy way, in the same round
Persisting still, she'll foil the beaten track.
But if she fly, and with the favouring wind
Urge her bold course, less intricate thy task;
Push on thy pack. Like some poor exiled wretch,
The frighted chase leaves her late dear abodes;
O'er plains remote she stretches far away,
Ah! never to return! For greedy Death
Hovering exults, secure to seize his prey.
Hark! from yon covert, where those towering oaks
Above the humble copse aspiring rise,
What glorious triumphs burst in every gale
Upon our ravish'd ears! The hunters shout,
The clanging horns swell their sweet-winding notes,
The pack wide opening load the trembling air
With various melody; from tree to tree
The propagated cry redoubling bounds,
And winged zephyrs waft the floating joy
Through all the regions near; afflictive birch
No more the schoolboy dreads, his prison broke,
Scampering he flies, nor heeds his master's call;
The weary traveller forgets his road,
And climbs th' adjacent hill; the ploughman leaves
Th' unfinish'd furrow; nor his bleating flocks
Are now the shepherd's joy! men, boys, and girls,
Desert th' unpeopled village; and wild crowds
Spread o'er the plain, by the sweet frenzy seized.
Look, how she pants! and o'er yon opening glade
Slips glancing by! while, at the farther end,
The puzzling pack unravel wile by wile,

Maze within maze. The covert's utmost bound
Slyly she skirts; behind them cautious creeps,
And in that very track so lately stain'd
By all the steaming crowd, seems to pursue
The foe she flies. Let cavillers deny
That brutes have reason; sure 'tis something more;
'Tis Heaven directs, and stratagems inspires
Beyond the short extent of human thought.
But hold—I see her from the covert break;
Sad on yon little eminence she sits;
Intent she listens with one ear erect,
Pondering, and doubtful what new course to take,
And how t' escape the fierce blood-thirsty crew,
That still urge on, and still in volleys loud
Insult her woes, and mock her sore distress.
As now in louder peals the loaded winds
Bring on the gathering storm, her fears prevail,
And o'er the plain, and o'er the mountain's ridge,
Away she flies; nor ships with wind and tide,
And all their canvas wings, scud half so fast.
Once more, ye jovial train, your courage try,
And each clean courser's speed. We scour along,
In pleasing hurry and confusion tost;
Oblivion to be wish'd. The patient pack
Hang on the scent unwearied, up they climb,
And ardent we pursue; our labouring steeds
We press, we gore; till once the summit gain'd,
Painfully panting, there we breathe a while;
Then, like a foaming torrent, pouring down
Precipitant, we smoke along the vale.
Happy the man who, with unrivall'd speed,
Can pass his fellows, and with pleasure view
The struggling pack; how in the rapid course
Alternate they preside, and jostling push
To guide the dubious scent; how giddy youth
Oft babbling errs, by wiser age reproved;
How, niggard of his strength, the wise old hound
Hangs in the rear, till some important point
Rouse all his diligence, or till the chase
Sinking he finds: then to the head he springs
With thirst of glory fired, and wins the prize.
Huntsman, take heed; they stop in full career.
Yon crowding flocks, that at a distance gaze,
Have haply foil'd the turf. See! that old hound,
How busily he works, but dares not trust
His doubtful sense; draw yet a wider ring.
Hark! now again the chorus fills. As bells,

*

Sally'd a while, at once their peal renew,
And high in air the tuneful thunder rolls.
See, how they toss, with animated rage
Recovering all they lost!—That eager haste
Some doubling wile foreshows.—Ah! yet once more
They're check'd,—hold back with speed—on either hand
They flourish round—ev'n yet persist—'Tis right,
Away they spring; the rustling stubbles bend
Beneath the driving storm. Now the poor chase
Begins to flag, to her last shifts reduced.
From brake to brake she flies, and visits all
Her well-known haunts, where once she ranged secure,
With love and plenty blest. See! there she goes,
She reels along, and by her gait betrays
Her inward weakness. See, how black she looks!
The sweat, that clogs th' obstructed pores, scarce leaves
A languid scent. And now in open view
See, see, she flies! each eager hound exerts
His utmost speed, and stretches every nerve.
How quick she turns; their gaping jaws eludes,
And yet a moment lives; till, round enclosed
By all the greedy pack, with infant screams
She yields her breath, and there reluctant dies.

From The Chase.



This poet, who is not generally known, and to whom Johnson churlishly refused a place among the British poets, was born, it is supposed, in London, in 1696. As his parents were Dissenters, they educated their son with the strictest rigour of their sect, and, in consequence of this injudicious austerity, he no sooner entered the world than he threw himself loose from religious belief, and became a free-thinker. He obtained a place in the Custom House, which ensured him a fixed and comfortable salary; but he was a martyr to low spirits, to obtain relief from which he composed his poem The Spleen, the best of his productions. His poems were not published till after his death, which occurred in 1737.

REMEDIES FOR THE SPLEEN.

Hunting I reckon very good
To brace the nerves, and stir the blood:
But after no field honours itch,
Achieved by leaping hedge and ditch.
While Spleen lies soft relax'd in bed,
Or o'er coal fires inclines the head,
Hygeia's sons, with hound and horn,
And jovial cry, awake the morn.

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Or o'er coal fires inclines the head,
Hygeia's sons, with hound and horn,
And jovial cry, awake the morn.
These see her from the dusky plight,
Smear'd by th' embraces of the night,
With roral wash redeem her face,
And prove herself of Titan's race;
And, mounting in loose robes the skies,
Shed light and fragrance as she flies.
Then horse and hound fierce joy display,
Exulting at the hark-away,
And in pursuit o'er tainted ground
From lungs robust field notes resound.
Then, as St. George the dragon slew,
Spleen pierced, trod down, and dying, view;
While all their spirits are on wing,
And woods, and hills, and valleys, ring.

To cure the mind's wrong bias, Spleen,
Some recommend the bowling-green;
Some, hilly walks; all, exercise;
Fling but a stone, the giant dies;
Laugh and be well. Monkeys have been
Extreme good doctors for the spleen;
And kitten, if the humour hit,
Has harlequin'd away the fit.

Since mirth is good in this behalf,
At some partic'lars let us laugh.

Witlings, brisk fools, cursed with half sense,
That stimulates their impotence;
Who buzz in rhyme, and, like blind flies,
Err with their wings for want of eyes:
Poor authors worshipping a calf,
Deep tragedies that make us laugh,
A strict dissenter saying grace,
A lecturer preaching for a place,
Folks, things prophetic to dispense,
Making the past the future tense,
The popish dubbing of a priest,
Fine epitaphs on knaves deceased,
Green-apron'd Pythonissa's rage,
Great Æsculapius on his stage,
A miser starving to be rich,
The prior of Newgate's dying speech,
A jointured widow's ritual state,
Two Jews disputing tête à tête,
New almanacks composed by seers,
Experiments on felons' ears,
Disdainful prudes, who ceaseless ply
The superb muscle of the eye,
A coquet's April-weather face,
A Queenb'rough mayor behind his mace,
And fops in military show,
Are sov'reign for the case in view.

If spleen-fogs rise at close of day,
I clear my ev'ning with a play,
Or to some concert take my way:
The company, the shine of lights,
The scenes of humour, music's flights,
Adjust and set the soul to rights.

Life's moving pictures, well-wrought plays,
To others' grief attention raise:
Here, while the tragic fictions glow,
We borrow joy by pitying woe;
There gaily comic scenes delight,
And hold true mirrors to our sight.
Virtue, in charming dress array'd,
Calling the passions to her aid,
When moral scenes just actions join,
Takes shape, and shows her face divine.

Music has charms, we all may find,
Ingratiate deeply with the mind.

When art does sound's high power advance,
To music's pipe the passions dance;
Motions unwill'd its powers have shown,
Tarantulated by a tune.
Many have held the soul to be
Nearly allied to harmony.
Her have I known indulging grief,
And shunning company's relief,
Unveil her face, and looking round,
Own, by neglecting sorrow's wound,
The consanguinity of sound.

In rainy days keep double guard,
Or Spleen will surely be too hard;
Which, like those fish by sailors met,
Fly highest, while their wings are wet.
In such dull weather, so unfit
To enterprise a work of wit,
When clouds one yard of azure sky,
That 's fit for simile, deny,
I dress my face with studious looks,
And shorten tedious hours with books.
But if dull fogs invade the head,
That mem'ry minds not what is read,
I sit in window dry as ark,
And on the drowning world remark:
Or to some coffee-house I stray
For news, the manna of a day,
And from the hipp'd discourses gather,
That politics go by the weather;
Then seek good-humour'd tavern chums,
And play at cards, but for small sums;
Or with the merry fellows quaff,
And laugh aloud with them that laugh;
Or drink a joco-serious cup
With souls who 've took their freedom up,
And let my mind, beguiled by talk,
In Epicurus' garden walk,
Who thought it heav'n to be serene;
Pain, hell, and purgatory—spleen.

Sometimes I dress, with women sit,
And chat away the gloomy fit;
Quit the stiff garb of serious sense,
And wear a gay impertinence.
Nor think nor speak with any pains,
But lay on fancy's neck the reins.

From the Spleen.

IMAGINATION has invented few tales of a more mournful interest than the real history of this talented and most unfortunate genius. He was born in January, 1698; but even before he saw the light his misfortunes commenced, by the public avowal of his mother, the Countess of Macclesfield, who voluntarily confessed herself guilty of adultery, and that the expected child was begotten by the Earl Rivers. It would have been well if the shameless woman had stopped here; but not contented with thus depriving her unhappy child of wealth and rank, she abandoned him to obscurity and neglect, aspersed his character, embittered his enemies against him, and even endeavoured to procure his death upon the gallows. But who, after the admirable life of Savage by his friend Johnson, would attempt the same subject? After a strange career of improvidence, suffering, and misfortune, he died on the 31st of July, 1743, in Newgate prison, where he had been confined for a paltry debt.

SUFFERING WORTH.

O Thou, who form'd, who raised the poet's art,
(Voice of thy will!) unerring force impart!
If wailing worth can generous warmth excite,
If verse can gild instruction with delight,
Inspire his honest Muse with orient flame,
To rise, to dare, to reach the noblest aim!

But, O my friend! mysterious is our fate!
How mean his fortune, though his mind elate;
Æneas-like he passes through the crowd,
Unsought, unseen beneath misfortune's cloud;
Or seen with slight regard: Upraised his name:
His after-honour, and our after-shame.
The doom'd desert, to Avarice stands confess'd;
Her eyes averted are, and steel'd her breast.
Envy asquint the future wonder eyes:
Bold Insult, pointing, hoots him as he flies;
While coward Censure, skill'd in darker ways,
Hints sure detraction in dissembled praise.
Hunger, thirst, nakedness, there grievous fall;
Unjust derision too!—that tongue of gall!
Slow comes relief, with no mild charms endued,
Usher'd by pride, and by reproach pursued.
Forced pity meets him with a cold respect,
Unkind as scorn, ungenerous as neglect.

Yet, suffering Worth! thy fortitude will shine:
Thy foes are Virtue's, and her friends are thine!
Patience is thine, and peace thy days shall crown;
Thy treasure prudence, and thy claim renown:

Myriads, unborn, shall mourn thy hapless fate,
And myriads grow, by thy example, great!

From The Wanderer: Canto III.

ADVANTAGES OF ADVERSITY.

I know thy soul believes,
'Tis hard vice triumphs, and that virtue grieves;
Yet oft affliction purifies the mind,
Kind benefits oft flow from means unkind.
Were the whole known, that we uncouth suppose,
Doubtless, would beauteous symmetry disclose.
The naked cliff, that singly rough remains,
In prospect dignifies the fertile plains;
Lead-colour'd clouds, in scattering fragments seen,
Show, though in broken views, the blue serene.
Severe distresses industry inspire;
Thus captives oft excelling arts acquire,
And boldly struggle through a state of shame,
To life, ease, plenty, liberty, and fame.
Sword-law has often Europe's balance gain'd,
And one red victory years of peace maintain'd.
We pass through want to wealth, through dismal strife
To calm content, through death to endless life.
Libya thou nam'st—Let Afric's wastes appear
Curst by those heats that fructify the year;
Yet the same suns her orange-groves befriend,
Where clustering globes in shining rows depend.
Here, when fierce beams o'er withering plants are roll'd,
There, the green fruit seems ripen'd into gold.
Ev'n scenes that strike with terrible surprise,
Still prove a God, just, merciful, and wise.
Sad wintery blasts, that strip the autumn, bring
The milder beauties of a flowery spring.
Ye sulphurous fires in jaggy lightnings break!
Ye thunders rattle, and ye nations shake!
Ye storms of riving flame the forest tear!
Deep crack the rocks! rent trees be whirl'd in air;
Reft at a stroke, some stately fane we'll mourn;
Her tombs wide shatter'd, and her dead up-torn;
Were noxious spirits not from caverns drawn,
Rack'd earth would soon in gulfs enormous yawn:
Then all were lost!—Or would we floating view
The baleful cloud, there would destruction brew;
Plague, fever, frenzy, close-engendering lie,
Till these red ruptures clear the sullied sky.

From The Wanderer: Canto V.

SAVAGE ON HIS MISFORTUNES, AND THE QUEEN'S KINDNESS.

Thus unprophetic, lately misinspired,
I sung: Gay fluttering hope my fancy fired;
Inly secure, through conscious scorn of ill,
Nor taught by wisdom, how to balance will;
Rashly deceived, I saw no pits to shun,
But thought to purpose and to act were one;
Heedless what pointed cares pervert his way,
Whom caution arms not, and whom woes betray;
But now, exposed, and shrinking from distress,
I fly to shelter, while the tempests press;
My Muse to grief resigns the varying tone,
The raptures languish, and the numbers groan.

O memory! thou soul of joy and pain!
Thou actor of our passions o'er again!
Why dost thou aggravate the wretch's woe?
Why add continuous smart to every blow?
Few are my joys; alas! how soon forgot!
On that kind quarter thou invad'st me not:
While sharp and numberless my sorrows fall;
Yet thou repeat'st, and multiply'st them all.

O fate of late repentance! always vain:
Thy remedies but lull undying pain.
Where shall my hope find rest?—No mother's care
Shielded my infant innocence with prayer:
No father's guardian hand my youth maintain'd,
Call'd forth my virtues, or from vice restrain'd;
Is it not thine to snatch some powerful arm,
First to advance, then screen from future harm?
Am I return'd from death, to live in pain?
Or would imperial pity save in vain?
Distrust it not—what blame can mercy find,
Which gives at once a life, and rears a mind?

Mother, miscall'd, farewell—of soul severe,
This sad reflection yet may force one tear:
All I was wretched by to you I owed,
Alone from strangers every comfort flow'd.

Lost to the life you gave, your son no more,
And now adopted, who was doom'd before,
New-born, I may a nobler mother claim,
But dare not whisper her immortal name;
Supremely lovely, and serenely great!
Majestic Mother of a kneeling State!
Queen of a People's heart, who ne'er before
Agreed—yet now with one consent adore!

One contest yet remains in this desire,
Who most shall give applause, where all admire.

From The Bastard.

POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE POET.

Be posts disposed at will!—I have, for these,
No gold to plead, no impudence to teaze.
All secret service from my soul I hate;
All dark intrigues of pleasure, or of state.
I have no power election votes to gain;
No will to hackney out polemic strain;
To shape, as time shall serve, my verse, or prose,
To flatter thence, nor slur, a courtier's foes;
Nor him to daub with praise, if I prevail;
Nor shock'd by him with libels to assail.
Where these are not, what claim to me belongs?
Though mine the muse and virtue, birth and wrongs.
Where lives the statesman, so in honour clear,
To give where he has nought to hope, nor fear?
No!—there to seek, is but to find fresh pain:
The promise broke, renew'd, and broke again;
To be, as humour deigns, received, refused;

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No!—there to seek, is but to find fresh pain:
The promise broke, renew'd, and broke again;
To be, as humour deigns, received, refused;
By turns affronted, and by turns amused;
To lose that time which worthier thoughts require;
To lose the health which should those thoughts inspire;
To starve a hope; or, like cameleons, fare
On ministerial faith, which means but air.

From The Poet's Dependence on a Statesman.



THIS amiable author, whose works are little known in England, was born, it is supposed, about the year 1700. He was a merchant in the city of Glasgow, and aided Ramsay in his collection of Scottish poems, entitled, The Tea Table Miscellany. His Lyrics, and especially his song of Tweedside, have been frequently admired, while the name of the author has been forgotten. His personal history is very obscure, as well as the circumstances of his death, and it has been alleged, although there is no sufficient proof of the fact, that he was drowned while crossing from France to Scotland. The year of his death is uncertain.

THE BUSH ABOON TRAQUAIR.

Hear me, ye nymphs, and every swain,
I'll tell how Peggy grieves me:
Though, thus I languish, thus complain,
Alas! she ne'er believes me;
My vows and sighs, like silent air,
Unheeded never move her;
At the bonny bush aboon Traquair,
'Twas there I first did love her.

That day she smiled, and made me glad,
No maid seem'd ever kinder;
I thought myself the luckiest lad,
So sweetly there to find her.
I tried to soothe my amorous flame
In words that I thought tender;
If more there pass'd, I'm not to blame,
I meant not to offend her.

Yet now she scornful flees the plain,
The fields we then frequented;
If e'er we meet, she shows disdain,
She looks as ne'er acquainted.
The bonny bush bloom'd fair in May,
Its sweets I'll aye remember;
But now her frowns make it decay,
It fades as in December.

Ye rural powers who hear my strains,
Why thus should Peggy grieve me?
Oh! make her partner in my pains,
Then let her smiles relieve me.
If not, my love will turn despair,
My passion no more tender;

*

I'll leave the bush aboon Traquair—
To lonely wilds I'll wander.

TWEEDSIDE.

What beauties does Flora disclose!
How sweet are her smiles upon Tweed!
Yet Mary's, still sweeter than those,
Both nature and fancy exceed.
Nor daisy, nor sweet-blushing rose,
Not all the gay flowers of the field,
Not Tweed gliding gently through those,
Such beauty and pleasure does yield.

The warblers are heard in the grove,
The linnet, the lark, and the thrush,
The blackbird, and sweet-cooing dove,
With music enchant every bush.
Come, let us go forth to the mead,
Let us see how the primroses spring;
We'll lodge in some village on Tweed,
And love while the feather'd folks sing.

How does my love pass the long day?
Does Mary not tend a few sheep?
Do they never carelessly stray,
While happily she lies asleep?
Tweed's murmurs should lull her to rest;
Kind nature indulging my bliss,
To relieve the soft pains of my breast,
I'd steal an ambrosial kiss.

'Tis she does the virgins excel,
No beauty with her may compare:
Love's graces around her do dwell;
She's fairest where thousands are fair.
Say, charmer, where do thy flocks stray,
Oh! tell me at noon where they feed;
Shall I seek them on smooth-winding Tay,
Or the pleasanter banks of the Tweed?

William Hamilton, of Bangour, was born of an ancient family in Ayrshire, North Britain, in 1704. Although he was of literary habits, and possessed a delicate constitution, he joined the insurgents in favour of the Pretender, in 1745, and wrote an heroic eulogy upon their success at Preston Pans. But when the cause was crushed at Culloden, the unfortunate bard shared largely in the miseries of the vanquished, being obliged to skulk in the Highlands, until he found an opportunity of escaping into France. He at length made his peace with government, and returned to take possession of his family estate; but an impaired constitution obliged him to return to the continent, where he died of consumption in 1754.

SONG.

Ah, the poor shepherd's mournful fate,
When doom'd to love, and doom'd to languish;
To bear the scornful fair one's hate,
Nor dare disclose his anguish!
Yet eager looks and dying sighs,
My secret soul discover:
While rapture trembling through mine eyes,
Reveals how much I love her.

The tender glance, the reddening cheek
O'erspread with rising blushes,
A thousand various ways they speak,
A thousand various wishes.
For oh! that form so heavenly fair,
Those languid eyes so sweetly smiling,
That artless blush and modest air,
So fatally beguiling!—

The every look and every grace,
So charm whene'er I view thee;
Till death o'ertake me in the chase,
Still will my hopes pursue thee:
Then when my tedious hours are past,
Be this last blessing given,
Low at thy feet to breath my last,
And die in sight of heaven.

FROM CONTEMPLATION, OR THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE.

Contemplation, baffled maid,
Remains there yet no other aid?
Helpless and weary must thou yield
To love supreme in every field?
Let Melancholy last engage,
Rev'rend, hoary-mantled sage.

Sure, at his sable flag's display
Love's idle troop will flit away:
And bring with him his due compeer,
Silence, sad, forlorn, and drear.
Haste thee, Silence, haste and go,
To search the gloomy world below.
My trembling steps, O Sibyl, lead,
Through the dominions of the dead:
Where Care, enjoying soft repose,
Lays down the burden of his woes;
Where meritorious Want no more
Shiv'ring begs at Grandeur's door;
Unconscious Grandeur, seal'd his eyes,
On the mouldering purple lies.
In the dim and dreary round,
Speech in eternal chains lies bound.
And see a tomb, its gates display'd,
Expands an everlasting shade.
O ye inhabitants! that dwell
Each forgotten in your cell,
O say! for whom of human race
Has fate decreed this hiding-place?
And hark! methinks a spirit calls,
Low winds the whisper round the walls,
A voice the sluggish air that breaks,
Solemn amid the silence speaks.
Mistaken man, thou seek'st to know,
What known will but afflict with woe;
There thy Monimia shall abide,
With the pale bridegroom rest a bride,
The wan assistants there shall lay,
In weeds of death, her beauteous clay.
O words of woe! what do I hear?
What sounds invade a lover's ear?
Must then thy charms, my anxious care,
The fate of vulgar beauty share?
Good heaven retard (for thine the power)
The wheels of time, that roll the hour.
Yet ah! why swells my breast with fears?
Why start the interdicted tears?
Love, dost thou tempt again? depart,
Thou devil, cast out from my heart.
Sad I forsook the feast, the ball,
The sunny bower, and lofty hall,
And sought the dungeon of despair;
Yet thou overtakest me there.

JOHN BYROM, a poet of singularly amiable character, was born at Kersal, in 1691. He was educated at Merchant Tailors' School, after which he obtained, through the favour of Dr. Bentley, the father of the Phœbe of his pastoral, a fellowship at Cambridge; but as he declined to go into the church, he was obliged to vacate it. Afterward, he went to London, and supported himself by teaching the art of stenography, until, by the death of his elder brother, he succeeded to the family estate, and enjoyed competence for the rest of his life. He died in 1763.

A PASTORAL.

I.

My time, O ye Muses, was happily spent,
When Phœbe went with me wherever I went;
Ten thousand sweet pleasures I felt in my breast:
Sure never fond shepherd like Colin was blest!
But now she is gone, and has left me behind,
What a marvellous change on a sudden I find!
When things were as fine as could possibly be,
I thought 'twas the Spring; but, alas! it was she.

II.

With such a companion to tend a few sheep,
To rise up and play, or to lie down and sleep:
I was so good-humour'd, so cheerful, and gay,
My heart was as light as a feather all day:
But now I so cross and so peevish am grown,
So strangely uneasy, as never was known.
My fair one is gone, and my joys are all drown'd,
And my heart——I am sure it weighs more than a pound.

III.

The fountain, that wont to run sweetly along,
And dance to soft murmurs the pebbles among;
Thou know'st, little Cupid, if Phœbe was there,
'Twas pleasure to look at, 'twas music to hear:
But now she is absent, I walk by its side,
And still, as it murmurs, do nothing but chide;
Must you be so cheerful, while I go in pain?
Peace there with your babbling, and hear me complain.

IV.

My lambkins around me would oftentimes play,
And Phœbe and I were as joyful as they;
How pleasant their sporting, how happy their time,
When Spring, Love, and Beauty, were all in their prime;

But now, in their frolics when by me they pass,
I fling at their fleeces a handful of grass;
Be still then, I cry, for it makes me quite mad,
To see you so merry while I am so sad.

V.

My dog I was ever well pleased to see
Come wagging his tail to my fair one and me;
And Phœbe was pleased too, and to my dog said,
"Come hither, poor fellow;" and patted his head.
But now, when he 's fawning, I with a sour look
Cry "Sirrah;" and give him a blow with my crook:
And I 'll give him another; for why should not Tray
Be as dull as his master, when Phœbe 's away?

VI.

When walking with Phœbe, what sights have I seen,
How fair was the flower, how fresh was the green!
What a lovely appearance the trees and the shade,
The corn fields and hedges, and every thing, made!
But now she has left me, though all are still there,
They none of them now so delightful appear:
'Twas nought but the magic, I find, of her eyes,
Made so many beautiful prospects arise.

VII.

Sweet music went with us both all the wood through,
The lark, linnet, throstle, and nightingale too:
Winds over us whisper'd, flocks by us did bleat,
And chirp went the grasshopper under our feet.
But now she is absent, though still they sing on,
The woods are but lonely, the melody 's gone:
Her voice in the concert, as now I have found,
Gave every thing else its agreeable sound.

VIII.

Rose, what is become of thy delicate hue?
And where is the violet's beautiful blue?
Does aught of its sweetness the blossom beguile?
That meadow, those daisies, why do they not smile?
Ah! rivals, I see what it was that you drest,
And made yourselves fine for—a place in her breast:
You put on your colours to pleasure her eye,
To be pluck'd by her hand, on her bosom to die.

IX.

How slowly Time creeps till my Phœbe return !
While amidst the soft zephyr's cool breezes I burn :
Methinks, if I knew whereabouts he would tread,
I could breathe on his wings, and 'twould melt down the lead.
Fly swifter, ye minutes, bring hither my dear,
And rest so much longer for't when she is here.
Ah Colin ! old Time is full of delay,
Nor will budge one foot faster for all thou canst say.

X

Will no pitying power, that hears me complain,
Or cure my disquiet, or soften my pain ?
To be cured, thou must, Colin, thy passion remove ;
But what swain is so silly to live without love ?
No, deity, bid the dear nymph to return,
For ne'er was poor shepherd so sadly forlorn.
Ah ! what shall I do ? I shall die with despair ;
Take heed, all ye swains, how ye part with your fair.

THE BEAU AND THE BEDLAMITE.

A patient in Bedlam that did pretty well,
Was permitted sometimes to go out of his cell.
One day when they gave him that freedom, he spied
A beauish young spark with a sword by his side,
With a huge silver hilt, and a scabbard of steel,
That swung at due length from his hip to his heel.
When he saw him advance on the gallery ground,
The bedlamite ran, and survey'd him all round ;
While a waiter suppress'd the young captain's alarm
With—" You need not to fear, sir, he'll do you no harm."
At the last he broke out—*Aye, a very fine show !*
May I ask him one question? " What's that?" said the beau.
Pray, what is that long, dangling, cumbersome thing,
Which you seem to be tied to with ribband and string?
" Why that is my sword?"—*And what is it to do?*
" Kill my enemies, master, by running them through."
Kill your enemies ! Kill a fool's head of your own !
They'll die of themselves, if you let them alone.

THIS poet was born in Scotland, about 1700. It was supposed that his father belonged to the proscribed clan of Macgregor, and that on emigrating to the Lowlands he changed his name to Malloch, which the poet afterwards Anglicised into Mallet. James became tutor to the sons of the Duke of Montrose, and afterwards he conducted them upon the grand tour. On returning home, he became a wit, courtier, and poet; was admitted into the brilliant circles of fashion, and the societies of the learned and talented; and attained distinction and wealth, not so much by his intellectual merits as his dexterity in turning them to account. He died in April, 1765. His poems, with the exception of two ballads, Edwin and Emma, and William and Margaret, are now in a great measure forgotten.

WILLIAM AND MARGARET.

'Twas at the silent, solemn hour,
When night and morning meet;
In glided Margaret's grimly ghost,
And stood at William's feet.

Her face was like an April morn,
Clad in a wintery cloud;
And clay-cold was her lily hand,
That held her sable shroud.

So shall the fairest face appear,
When youth and years are flown:
Such is the robe that kings must wear,
When death has reft their crown.

Her bloom was like the springing flower,
That sips the silver dew;
The rose was budded in her cheek,
Just opening to the view.

But Love had, like the canker-worm,
Consumed her early prime:
The rose grew pale, and left her cheek;
She died before her time.

Awake! she cried, thy true-love calls,
Come from her midnight grave;
Now let thy pity hear the maid,
Thy love refused to save.

This is the dumb and dreary hour,
When injured ghosts complain;

When yawning graves give up their dead,
To haunt the faithless swain.

Bethink thee, William, of thy fault,
Thy pledge and broken oath!
And give me back my maiden vow,
And give me back my troth.

Why did you promise love to me,
And not that promise keep?
Why did you swear my eyes were bright,
Yet leave those eyes to weep?

How could you say my face was fair,
And yet that face forsake?
How could you win my virgin heart,
Yet leave that heart to break?

Why did you say my lip was sweet,
And made the scarlet pale?
And why did I, young witless maid!
Believe the flattering tale?

That face, alas! no more is fair,
Those lips no longer red:
Dark are my eyes, now closed in death,
And every charm is fled.

The hungry worm my sister is;
This winding-sheet I wear:
And cold and weary lasts our night,
Till that last morn appear.

But, hark! the cock has warn'd me hence;
A long and late adieu!
Come, see, false man, how low she lies,
Who died for love of you.

The lark sung loud; the morning smiled,
With beams of rosy red:
Pale William quaked in every limb,
And raving left his bed.

He hied him to the fatal place
Where Margaret's body lay;
And stretch'd him on the green-grass turf,
That wrapp'd her breathless clay.

And thrice he call'd on Margaret's name,
  And thrice he wept full sore;
Then laid his cheek to her cold grave,
  And word spoke never more!

EDWIN AND EMMA.

Far in the windings of a vale,
  Fast by a sheltering wood,
The safe retreat of health and peace,
  An humble cottage stood.

There beauteous Emma flourish'd fair,
  Beneath a mother's eye;
Whose only wish on earth was now
  To see her blest, and die.

The softest blush that Nature spreads
  Gave colour to her cheek:
Such orient colour smiles through heaven,
  When vernal mornings break.

Nor let the pride of great ones scorn
  This charmer of the plains:
That sun, who bids their diamonds blaze,
  To paint our lily deigns.

Long had she fill'd each youth with love,
  Each maiden with despair;
And though by all a wonder own'd,
  Yet knew not she was fair.

Till Edwin came, the pride of swains,
  A soul devoid of art;
And from whose eye, serenely mild,
  Shone forth the feeling heart.

A mutual flame was quickly caught:
  Was quickly too reveal'd:
For neither bosom lodged a wish,
  That virtue keeps conceal'd.

What happy hours of home-felt bliss
  Did love on both bestow!
But bliss too mighty long to last,
  Where fortune proves a foe.

His sister, who, like Envy form'd,
Like her in mischief joy'd,
To work them harm, with wicked skill,
Each darker art employ'd.

The Father too, a sordid man,
Who love nor pity knew,
Was all unfeeling as the clod,
From whence his riches grew.

Long had he seen their secret flame,
And seen it long unmoved:
Then with a father's frown at last
Had sternly disapproved.

In Edwin's gentle heart, a war
Of differing passions strove:
His heart, that durst not disobey,
Yet could not cease to love.

Denied her sight, he oft behind
The spreading hawthorn crept,
To snatch a glance, to mark the spot
Where Emma walk'd and wept.

Oft too on Stanemore's wintery waste,
Beneath the moonlight shade,
In sighs to pour his soften'd soul,
The midnight mourner stray'd.

His cheek, where health with beauty glow'd,
A deadly pale o'ercast:
So fades the fresh rose in its prime,
Before the northern blast.

The parents now, with late remorse,
Hung o'er his dying bed;
And wearied heaven with fruitless vows,
And fruitless sorrows shed.

'Tis past! he cried—but if your souls
Sweet mercy yet can move,
Let these dim eyes once more behold,
What they must ever love!

She came; his cold hand softly touch'd,
And bathed with many a tear:
Fast falling o'er the primrose pale,
So morning dews appear.

But oh! his sister's jealous care,
A cruel sister she!
Forbade what Emma came to say—
"My Edwin, live for me!"

Now homeward as she hopeless wept
The churchyard path along,
The blast blew cold, the dark owl scream'd
Her lover's funeral song.

Amid the falling gloom of night,
Her startling fancy found
In every bush his hovering shade,
His groan in every sound.

Alone, appall'd, thus had she pass'd
The visionary vale—
When lo! the death-bell smote her ear,
Sad sounding in the gale!

Just then she reach'd, with trembling step,
Her aged mother's door—
He 's gone! she cried; and I shall see
That angel face no more.

I feel, I feel this breaking heart
Beat high against my side—
From her white arm down sunk her head;
She shivering sigh'd, and died.

EPITAPH ON A YOUNG LADY.

This humble grave though no proud structures grace,
Yet Truth and Goodness sanctify the place:
Yet blameless Virtue that adorn'd thy bloom,
Lamented maid! now weeps upon thy tomb.
O 'scaped from life! O safe on that calm shore,
Where sin, and pain, and passion, are no more!
What never wealth could buy, nor power decree,
Regard and Pity, wait sincere on thee:
Lo! soft Remembrance drops a pious tear;
And holy Friendship stands a mourner here.

He was the son of a physician, and was born at Blandford, in 1699. He first received his education at Winchester College, where he distinguished himself by great proficiency in classical learning, after which he was removed to New College. As he studied for the Church, he was presented, in 1722, to the rectory of Pimpern, in Dorsetshire. Pitt was chiefly eminent as a translator, and even while at college he rendered the whole of Lucian's Pharsalia into English verse. He afterwards translated Vida's Art of Poetry; and, encouraged by the reception with which it was welcomed, he in his thirtieth year commenced a translation of Virgil's Æneid, which he completed to the high satisfaction of the literary world. Pitt died in 1748, beloved by his people on account of his amiable character, as well as by society at large on account of his talents and learning.

ON A SHADOW: An Ode.

How are deluded human kind
  By empty shows betray'd?
In all their hopes and schemes they find
  A nothing or a shade.

The prospects of a truncheon cast
  The soldier on the wars;
Dismiss'd with shatter'd limbs at last,
  Brats, poverty, and scars.

The fond philosophers for gain
  Will leave unturn'd no stone;
But though they toil with endless pain,
  They never find their own.

By the same rock the chemists drown,
  And find no friendly hold,
But melt their ready specie down,
  In hopes of fancied gold.

What is the mad projector's care?
  In hopes elate and swelling,
He builds his castles in the air,
  Yet wants a house to dwell in.

At court the poor dependants fail,
  And damn their fruitless toil,
When complimented thence to jail,
  And ruin'd with a smile.

How to philosophers will sound
So strange a truth display'd?
"There's not a substance to be found,
But every where a shade."

FROM THE ART OF PREACHING.

Some steal a page of sense from Tillotson,
And then conclude divinely with their own.
Like oil on water, mounts the prelate up;
His Grace is always sure to be at top:
That vein of mercury its beams will spread,
And shine more strongly through a mine of lead.
With such low arts your audience never bilk;
For who can bear a fustian lined with silk?
Sooner than preach such stuff, I'd walk the town,
Without my scarf, in Whiston's draggled gown;
Ply at the Chapter, and at Child's, to read
For pence, and bury for a groat a head.

Some easy subject choose, within your power,
Or you can never hold out half an hour.
One rule observe: this Sunday split your text;
Preach one part now, and t' other half the next.
Speak, look, and move, with dignity and ease;
Like mitred Secker, you'll be sure to please.
But, if you whine like boys at country schools,
Can you be said to study Cambray's rules?
Begin with care, nor, like that curate vile,
Set out in this high prancing stumbling style,
"Whoever with a piercing eye can see
Through the past records of futurity—"
All gape—no meaning—the puff'd orator
Talks much, and says just nothing for an hour.
Truth and the text he labours to display,
Till both are quite interpreted away:
So frugal dames insipid water pour,
Till green, bohea, and coffee, are no more.
His arguments in silly circles run
Still round and round, and end where they begun:
So the poor turn-spit, as the wheel runs round,
The more he gains, the more he loses ground.

THIS was a poet, who, like Philips, was a sort of poetical mock-bird, having no tune of his own, but readily catching that of any other author, and upon this imitativeness his chief merit depends. He was born at Burton-upon-Trent, in 1705. He was educated at Westminster, and subsequently at Cambridge, after which he studied at Lincoln's Inn. Being however of independent circumstances, he did not engage in the active pursuits of the legal profession. He was twice elected member of Parliament for Wenlocke, in Shropshire, and he died in 1760 His chief work is entitled A Pipe of Tobacco, in which he has successfully imitated some of our principal poets.

A PIPE OF TOBACCO.

IMITATION I.—COLLEY CIBBER. A NEW YEAR'S ODE.

RECITATIVO.

Old Battle-array, big with horror, is fled,
And olive-robed Peace again lifts up her head.
Sing, ye Muses, Tobacco, the blessing of peace;
Was ever a nation so blessed as this?

AIR.

When summer suns grow red with heat,
Tobacco tempers Phœbus' ire;
When wintry storms around us beat,
Tobacco cheers with gentle fire.
Yellow autumn, youthful spring,
In thy praises jointly sing.

RECITATIVO.

Like Neptune, Cæsar guards Virginian fleets,
Fraught with Tobacco's balmy sweets;
Old Ocean trembles at Britannia's power,
And Boreas is afraid to roar.

AIR.

Happy mortal! he who knows
Pleasure which a pipe bestows;
Curling eddies climb the room,
Wafting round a mild perfume.

RECITATIVO.

Let foreign climes the wine and orange boast,
While wastes of war deform the teeming coast;
Britannia, distant from each hostile sound,
Enjoys a Pipe, with ease and freedom crown'd:
E'en restless faction finds itself most free,
Or if a slave, a slave to liberty.

AIR.

Smiling years that gaily run
Round the zodiac with the sun,
Tell if ever you have seen
Realms so quiet and serene.
British sons no longer now
Hurl the bar or twang the bow,
Nor of crimson combat think,
But securely smoke and drink.

CHORUS.

Smiling years, that gaily run
Round the zodiac with the sun,
Tell if ever you have seen
Realms so quiet and serene.

IMITATION II.—AMBROSE PHILIPS.

Little tube of mighty power,
Charmer of an idle hour,
Object of my warm desire,
Lip of wax and eye of fire;
And thy snowy taper waist,
With my finger gently braced;
And thy pretty swelling crest,
With my little stopper prest,
And the sweetest bliss of blisses,
Breathing from thy balmy kisses.
Happy thrice, and thrice again,
Happiest he of happy men,
Who when again the night returns,
When again the taper burns,
When again the cricket's gay
(Little cricket full of play),
Can afford his tube to feed
With the fragrant Indian weed:
Pleasure for a nose divine,
Incense of the god of wine.
Happy thrice, and thrice again,
Happiest he of happy men.

IMITATION III.—JAMES THOMSON.

O thou, matured by glad Hesperian suns,
Tobacco, fountain pure of *limpid truth*,

That looks the very soul; whence pouring thought
Swarms all the mind; absorpt his yellow care,
And at each puff imagination burns:
Flash on thy bard, and with exalting fires
Touch the mysterious lip that chants thy praise
In strains to mortal sons of earth unknown.
Behold an engine, wrought from tawny mines
Of ductile clay, with *plastic virtue* form'd,
And glazed magnific o'er, I grasp, I fill.
From Pætotheke with pungent powers perfumed,
Itself one tortoise all, where shines imbibed
Each parent ray; then rudely ramm'd illume,
With the red touch of zeal-enkindling sheet,
Mark'd with Gibsonian lore; forth issue clouds,
Thought-thrilling, thirst-inciting clouds around,
And many-mining fires; I all the while,
Lolling at ease, *inhale* the breezy balm.
But chief, when *Bacchus wont with thee to join*
In genial strife and orthodoxal ale,
Stream life and joy into the Muse's bowl.
Oh be thou still *my great inspirer*, thou
My Muse; oh fan me with thy zephyrs boon;
While I, in clouded tabernacle shrined,
Burst forth all oracle and mystic song.

IMITATION V.—ALEXANDER POPE.

Blest leaf! whose aromatic gales dispense
To Templars modesty, to parsons sense:
So raptured priests, at famed Dodona's shrine,
Drank inspiration from the steam divine.
Poison that cures, a vapour that affords
Content, more solid than the smile of lords:
Rest to the weary, to the hungry food,
The last kind refuge of the wise and good.
Inspired by thee, dull cits adjust the scale
Of Europe's peace, when other statesmen fail.
By thee protected, and thy sister, beer,
Poets rejoice, nor think the bailiff near.
Nor less the critic owns thy genial aid,
While supperless he plies the piddling trade.
What though to love and soft delights a foe,
By ladies hated, hated by the beau?
Yet social freedom, long to courts unknown,
Fair health, fair truth, and virtue, are thy own.
Come to thy poet, come with healing wings,
And let me taste thee unexcised by kings.

This poet, whose talents scarcely obtained justice during his own day, and who since that period has been almost entirely neglected, was the son of a dissenting clergyman at Abingdon, in Berkshire, where he was born in 1712. He was originally bred to the humble business of a linen-draper, which he followed in London and Ireland; but finding no success in trade, and becoming disgusted with his unpoetical occupation, he forsook the counter, and became a literary adventurer. His verses were distinguished by correctness of taste and elegance of sentiment; and his Fables, which he published in 1744, first brought him into notice. He gained the patronage of Lord Lyttelton, and other influential persons, and devoted himself to dramatic writing, in which his Gamester, which still keeps possession of the stage, was eminently successful. In 1751, Lord Lyttelton, in conjunction with Dodsley, planned a periodical, called The World, of which Moore was to enjoy the profits, and the work went on prosperously till the conclusion, which preceded the death of Moore only by a few weeks. He died in 1757.

THE RETURN OF THE PENITENT.

Lovely Penitent, arise,
Come, and claim thy kindred skies;
Come, thy sister angels say,
Thou hast wept thy stains away.
Let experience now decide,
'Twixt the good and evil tried;
In the smooth, enchanted ground,
Say, unfold the treasures found.
Structures, raised by morning dreams,
Sands, that trip the flitting streams,
Down, that anchors on the air,
Clouds, that paint their changes there.
Seas, that smoothly dimpling lie,
While the storm impends on high,
Showing, in an obvious glass,
Joys, that in possession pass,
Transient, fickle, light, and gay,
Flattering, only to betray;
What, alas, can life contain!
Life, like all its circles, vain!
Will the stork, intending rest,
On the billow build her nest?
Will the bee demand his store
From the bleak and bladeless shore?
Man alone, intent to stray,
Ever turns from wisdom's way,
Lays up wealth in foreign land,
Sows the sea, and ploughs the sand.

Soon this elemental mass,
Soon th' incumb'ring world shall pass,
Form be wrapt in wasting fire,
Time be spent, and life expire.
Then, ye boasted works of men,
Where is your asylum then?
Sons of pleasure, sons of care,
Tell me, mortals, tell me where?
Gone, like traces on the deep,
Like a sceptre grasp'd in sleep,
Dews, exhaled from morning glades,
Melting snows, and gliding shades.
Pass the world, and what 's behind?
Virtue's gold, by fire refined;
From a universe depraved,
From the wreck of nature saved.
Like the life-supporting grain,
Fruit of patience, and of pain,
On the swain's autumnal day,
Winnow'd from the chaff away.
Little trembler, fear no more,
Thou hast plenteous crops in store,
Seed, by genial sorrows sown,
More than all thy scorners own.
What though hostile earth despise,
Heav'n beholds with gentler eyes;
Heav'n thy friendless steps shall guide,
Cheer thy hours, and guard thy side.
When the fatal trump shall sound,
When th' immortals pour around,
Heav'n shall thy return attest,
Hail'd by myriads of the bless'd.
Little native of the skies,
Lovely penitent, arise,
Calm thy bosom, clear thy brow,
Virtue is thy sister now.
More delightful are my woes,
Than the rapture pleasure knows;
Richer far the weeds I bring,
Than the robes that grace a king.
On my wars of shortest date,
Crowns of endless triumphs wait;
On my cares, a period bless'd;
On my toils, eternal rest.
Come, with Virtue at thy side,
Come, be every bar defied,

'Till we gain our native shore,
Sister, come, and turn no more.

From Fables for the Ladies.

THE NIGHTINGALE AND GLOW-WORM. A FABLE.

The prudent nymph, whose cheeks disclose
The lily, and the blushing rose,
From public view her charms will screen,
And rarely in the crowd be seen;
This simple truth shall keep her wise,
"The fairest fruits attract the flies."

One night, a glow-worm, proud and vain,
Contemplating her glittering train,
Cried, Sure there never was in nature
So elegant, so fine a creature.
All other insects, that I see,
The frugal ant, industrious bee,
Or silk-worm, with contempt I view;
With all that low, mechanic crew,
Who servilely their lives employ
In business, enemy to joy.
Mean, vulgar herd! ye are my scorn,
For grandeur only I was born,
Or sure am sprung from race divine,
And placed on earth, to live and shine.
Those lights that sparkle so on high,
Are but the glow-worms of the sky,
And kings on earth their gems admire,
Because they imitate my fire.
She spoke. Attentive on a spray,
A Nightingale forbore his lay;
He saw the shining morsel near,
And flew, directed by the glare;
A while he gazed with sober look,
And thus the trembling prey bespoke:—
Deluded fool, with pride elate,
Know, 'tis thy beauty brings thy fate:
Less dazzling, long thou might'st have lain
Unheeded on the velvet plain:
Pride, soon or late, degraded mourns,
And beauty wrecks whom she adorns.

From Fables for the Ladies.

THE author of the Seasons was born September 7th, 1700, at Ednam, in Roxburgh, of which parish his father was minister. James received his education at the school of Jedburgh; and there, in the days of his boyhood, he showed his devotedness to poetry, by composing fugitive pieces—and his ambition for higher excellence, by throwing them into the fire on every new year's day. From Jedburgh he was removed to Edinburgh, the University of which he entered with the intention of studying for the church; but when his probationary discourse in the divinity hall was delivered, the language was so elevated and poetical, that the Professor of Divinity rebuked him for writing in a style so far beyond the capacities of any ordinary audience. Thomson, disgusted at this severe check, resolved to abandon all hopes of the church, and repair to London, as the place where talent would be certain to prosper; and on his arrival in the metropolis he found his countryman, Mallet, in whom he afterwards experienced a steady and influential friend.

The first entrance of Thomson into London, however, was accompanied with serious difficulties. His shoes were worn out with the pilgrimage, while his pockets contained nothing but his Winter, from which to raise the necessary supplies. This poem, too, was so much out of the common style, that the publishers, among whom he hawked it, demurred at the risk of the speculation, and refused to undertake it. At last, Mr. Millar purchased it for a small sum, and ventured to publish it: but even then the work threatened to lie dead upon the shelves, but for a fortunate accident. Mr. Whatley, a literary gentleman, having seen the production, was so struck by its merits, that he blazed its excellence through the town, and excited the attention of the public in its behalf. It gradually become popular; and the reputation of the unbefriended stranger was at length established upon a solid foundation. In the following year (1727), Thomson published the next part of his Seasons, entitled, Summer; a poem, On the Death of Sir Isaac Newton; and Britannia; and in 1728, appeared Spring. As for Autumn, its publication was delayed till 1730; but the poet of The Seasons had already turned his attention to the drama, and in 1727 he produced the tragedy of Sophonisba, which became popular, because the public were determined, in spite of their own feelings, to admire it. Thomson was now at the height of popularity. His circumstances were prosperous, and in consequence of his merited reputation, he was selected to accompany Mr. Charles Talbot, eldest son of the Chancellor, upon the grand tour. On his return, he published the fruits of his observations during two years, under the title of Liberty, a poem in five books, which the author regarded as the best of his works; but the public was, and has ever continued to be, of a different opinion, so that the unfortunate poem has seldom found a reader.

In consequence of the death of the Chancellor, Thomson was reduced, from a situation of ease and affluence, to his former state of indigence, which roused his constitutional indolence to exertion; and as he resolved to devote himself to dramatic writing, he produced, in 1738, the tragedy of Agamemnon, which was not successful in representation, although it was countenanced by Pope. He then produced Edward and Eleonora; but in consequence of the strict censorship which was established upon plays of a political tendency, a license to represent it was refused. Shortly after, he wrote, in conjunction with Mallet, The Masque of Alfred; and in 1745, appeared his Tancred and Sigismunda, the most successful of all his dramatic productions. A favourable change now took place upon his fortunes; for in addition to a pension, which he enjoyed from the Prince of Wales, of 100*l.* per annum, he was appointed Surveyor-general of the Leeward Isles, which, after deducting the salary allowed to his deputy, yielded 300*l.* more. The last work which Thomson published, was his exquisite poem, The Castle of Indolence, the best of his productions, that seems to have flowed, *con amore*, from the innermost depths of his heart, and which he had spent years in considering and correcting. He did not live long after this work had been published, and his death occurred August 27, 1748.



Hence! from the bounteous walks
Of flowing Spring, ye sordid sons of earth,
Hard and unfeeling of another's woe!
Or only lavish to yourselves; away!
But come, ye generous minds, in whose wide thought,
Of all his works, creative Bounty burns
With warmest beam; and on your open front
And liberal eye, sits, from his dark retreat
Inviting modest Want. Nor, till invoked
Can restless goodness wait: your active search
Leaves no cold wintry corner unexplored;
Like silent-working Heaven, surprising oft
The lonely heart with unexpected good.
For you the roving spirit of the wind
Blows Spring abroad; for you the teeming clouds
Descend in gladsome plenty o'er the world;
And the sun sheds his kindest rays for you,
Ye flower of human race! In these green days,
Reviving sickness lifts her languid head:
Life flows afresh; and young-eyed Health exalts

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THOMSON.

CHARITY INSPIRED BY SPRING.

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Or only lavish to yourselves; away!
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Ye flower of human race! In these green days,
Reviving sickness lifts her languid head:
Life flows afresh; and young-eyed Health exalts

The whole creation round. Contentment walks
The sunny glade, and feels an inward bliss
Spring o'er his mind, beyond the power of kings
To purchase.

From Spring.

SHEEP SHEARING.

Or rushing thence, in one diffusive band,
They drive the troubled flocks, by many a dog
Compell'd, to where the mazy-running brook
Forms a deep pool; this bank abrupt and high,
And that fair spreading in a pebbled shore.
Urged to the giddy brink, much is the toil,
The clamour much, of men, and boys, and dogs,
Ere the soft fearful people to the flood
Commit their woolly sides. And oft the swain,
On some impatient seizing, hurls them in:
Embolden'd then, nor hesitating more,
Fast, fast, they plunge amid the flashing wave,
And panting labour to the farthest shore.
Repeated this, till deep the well-wash'd fleece
Has drunk the flood, and from his lively haunt
The trout is banish'd by the sordid stream;
Heavy and dripping, to the breezy brow
Slow move the harmless race; where, as they spread
Their swelling treasures to the sunny ray,
Inly disturb'd, and wondering what this wild
Outrageous tumult means, their loud complaints
The country fill; and, toss'd from rock to rock,
Incessant bleatings run around the hills.
At last, of snowy white, the gather'd flocks
Are in the wattled pen innumerous press'd,
Head above head: and, ranged in lusty rows,
The shepherds sit, and whet the sounding shears.
The housewife waits to roll her fleecy stores,
With all her gay-dress'd maids attending round.
One, chief in gracious dignity enthroned,
Shines o'er the rest, the pastoral queen, and rays
Her smiles, sweet-beaming, on her shepherd-king;
While the glad circle round them yield their souls
To festive mirth, and wit that knows no gall.
Meantime, their joyous task goes on apace:
Some mingling stir the melted tar, and some,
Deep on the new-shorn vagrant's heaving side,
To stamp his master's cipher ready stand;

*

Others th' unwilling wether drag along;
And, glorying in his might, the sturdy boy
Holds by the twisted horns th' indignant ram.
Behold where bound, and of its robe bereft,
By needy man, that all-depending lord,
How meek, how patient, the mild creature lies!
What softness in its melancholy face,
What dumb complaining innocence appears!
Fear not, ye gentle tribes, 'tis not the knife
Of horrid slaughter that is o'er you waved;
No, 'tis the tender swain's well-guided shears,
Who having now, to pay his annual care,
Borrow'd your fleece, to you a cumbrous load,
Will send you bounding to your hills again.

From Summer.

A FOX HUNTING BANQUET.

But first the fuel'd chimney blazes wide;
The tankards foam; and the strong table groans
Beneath the smoking sirloin, stretch'd immense
From side to side; in which, with desperate knife,
They deep incision make, and talk the while
Of England's glory, ne'er to be defaced
While hence they borrow vigour; or amain
Into the pasty plunged, at intervals,
If stomach keen can intervals allow,
Relating all the glories of the chase.
Then sated Hunger bids his brother Thirst
Produce the mighty bowl; the mighty bowl,
Swell'd high with fiery juice, steams liberal round
A potent gale, delicious as the breath
Of Maia to the love-sick shepherdess,
On violets diffused, while soft she hears
Her panting shepherd stealing to her arms.
Nor wanting is the brown October, drawn,
Mature and perfect, from his dark retreat
Of thirty years; and now his honest front
Flames in the light refulgent, not afraid
Ev'n with the vineyard's best produce to vie.
To cheat the thirsty moments, whist a while
Walks his dull round, beneath a cloud of smoke,
Wreath'd, fragrant, from the pipe; or the quick dice,
In thunder leaping from the box, awake
The sounding gammon: while romp-loving miss
Is haul'd about, in gallantry robust.

At last these puling idlenesses laid
Aside, frequent and full, the dry divan
Close in firm circle; and set, ardent, in
For serious drinking. Nor evasion sly,
Nor sober shift, is to the puking wretch
Indulged apart; but earnest, brimming bowls
Lave every soul, the table floating round,
And pavement, faithless to the fuddled foot.
Thus as they swim in mutual swill, the talk,
Vociferous at once from twenty tongues,
Reels fast from theme to theme; from horses, hounds,
To church or mistress, politics or ghost,
In endless mazes, intricate, perplex'd.
Mean time, with sudden interruption, loud,
Th' impatient catch bursts from the joyous heart;
That moment touch'd is every kindred soul;
And, opening in a full-mouth'd cry of joy,
The laugh, the slap, the jocund curse, go round;
While, from their slumbers shook, the kennell'd hounds
Mix in the music of the day again.
As when the tempest, that has vex'd the deep
The dark night long, with fainter murmurs falls:
So gradual sinks their mirth. Their feeble tongues
Unable to take up the cumbrous word,
Lie quite dissolved. Before their maudlin eyes,
Seen dim, and blue, the double tapers dance,
Like the sun wading through the misty sky.
Then sliding soft, they drop. Confused above,
Glasses and bottles, pipes and gazetteers,
As if the table ev'n itself was drunk,
Lie a wet broken scene; and wide, below,
Is heap'd the social slaughter; where astride
The lubber Power in filthy triumph sits,
Slumberous, inclining still from side to side,
And steeps them drench'd in potent sleep till morn.
Perhaps some doctor, of tremendous paunch,
Awful and deep, a black abyss of drink,
Out-lives them all; and from his buried flock
Retiring, full of rumination sad,
Laments the weakness of these latter times.

From Autumn.

THE TRAVELLER LOST IN THE SNOW.

As thus the snows arise; and foul, and fierce,
All Winter drives along the darken'd air;

In his own loose-revolving fields, the swain
Disaster'd stands: sees other hills ascend,
Of unknown joyless brow; and other scenes,
Of horrid prospect, shag the trackless plain:
Nor finds the river, nor the forest, hid
Beneath the formless wild; but wanders on
From hill to dale, still more and more astray;
Impatient flouncing through the drifted heaps,
Stung with the thoughts of home; the thoughts of home
Rush on his nerves, and call their vigour forth
In many a vain attempt. How sinks his soul!
What black despair, what horror, fills his heart!
When for the dusky spot, which fancy feign'd
His tufted cottage rising through the snow,
He meets the roughness of the middle waste,
Far from the track and blest abode of man;
While round him night resistless closes fast,
And every tempest, howling o'er his head,
Renders the savage wilderness more wild.
Then throng the busy shapes into his mind,
Of cover'd pits, unfathomably deep,
A dire descent! beyond the power of frost;
Of faithless bogs; of precipices huge,
Smooth'd up with snow; and, what is land, unknown,
What water of the still unfrozen spring,
In the loose marsh or solitary lake,
Where the fresh fountain from the bottom boils.
These check his fearful steps; and down he sinks
Beneath the shelter of the shapeless drift,
Thinking o'er all the bitterness of death,
Mix'd with the tender anguish nature shoots
Through the wrung bosom of the dying man,
His wife, his children, and his friends, unseen.
In vain for him th' officious wife prepares
The fire fair-blazing, and the vestment warm;
In vain his little children, peeping out
Into the mingling storm, demand their sire,
With tears of artless innocence. Alas!
Nor wife, nor children, more shall he behold,
Nor friends, nor sacred home. On every nerve
The deadly winter seizes; shuts up sense;
And, o'er his inmost vitals creeping cold,
Lays him along the snows, a stiffen'd corse,
Stretch'd out, and bleaching in the northern blast.

From Winter.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCENERY AROUND THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

In lowly dale, fast by a river's side,
With woody hill o'er hill encompass'd round,
A most enchanting wizard did abide,
Than whom a fiend more fell is no where found:
It was, I ween, a lovely spot of ground;
And there a season atween June and May,
Half prankt with spring, with summer half imbrown'd,
A listless climate made, where, sooth to say,
No living wight could work, ne cared ev'n for play.

Was nought around but images of rest:
Sleep-soothing groves, and quiet lawns between;
And flowery beds that slumberous influence kest,
From poppies breathed; and beds of pleasant green
Where never yet was creeping creature seen.
Meantime unnumber'd glittering streamlets play'd,
And hurled every where their waters sheen;
That, as they bicker'd through the sunny glade,
Though restless still themselves, a lulling murmur made.

Join'd to the prattle of the purling rills,
Were heard the lowing herds along the vale,
And flocks loud-bleating from the distant hills,
And vacant shepherds piping in the dale:
And now and then sweet Philomel would wail,
Or stock-doves plain amid the forest deep,
That drowsy rustled to the sighing gale;
And still a coil the grasshopper did keep;
Yet all these sounds yblent inclined all to sleep.

Full in the passage of the vale, above,
A sable, silent, solemn forest stood;
Where nought but shadowy forms was seen to move,
As Idless fancy'd in her dreaming mood:
And up the hills, on either side, a wood
Of blackening pines, ay waving to and fro,
Sent forth a sleepy horror through the blood;
And where this valley winded out, below,
The murmuring main was heard, and scarcely heard, to flow.

A pleasing land of drowsy-head it was,
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
For ever flushing round a summer sky;
There eke the soft delights, that witchingly

Instil a wanton sweetness through the breast,
And the calm pleasures always hover'd nigh;
But whate'er smack'd of noyance, or unrest,
Was far far off expell'd from this delicious nest.

The landskip such, inspiring perfect ease,
Where Indolence (for so the wizard hight)
Close-hid his castle mid embowering trees,
That half shut out the beams of Phœbus bright,
And made a kind of checker'd day and night;
Meanwhile, unceasing at the massy gate,
Beneath a spacious palm, the wicked wight
Was placed; and to his lute, of cruel fate,
And labour harsh, complain'd, lamenting man's estate.

From The Castle of Indolence: Canto I.

THE ÆOLIAN HARP.

Each sound too here, to languishment inclined,
Lull'd the weak bosom, and induced ease,
Aërial music in the warbling wind,
At distance rising oft by small degrees,
Nearer and nearer came, till o'er the trees
It hung, and breathed such soul-dissolving airs,
As did, alas! with soft perdition please:
Entangled deep in its enchanting snares
The listening heart forgot all duties and all cares.

A certain music, never known before,
Here lull'd the pensive melancholy mind;
Full easily obtain'd. Behoves no more,
But sidelong, to the gently-waving wind,
To lay the well-tuned instrument reclined;
From which, with airy flying fingers light,
Beyond each mortal touch the most refined,
The god of winds drew sounds of deep delight:
Whence, with just cause, the harp of Æolus it hight.

Ah me! what hand can touch the string so fine?
Who up the lofty diapasan roll
Such sweet, such sad, such solemn airs divine,
Then let them down again into the soul?
Now rising love they fann'd; now pleasing dole
They breathed, in tender musings, through the heart;
And now a graver sacred strain they stole,

As when seraphic hands an hymn impart:
Wild-warbling nature all, above the reach of art!

From the Castle of Indolence: Canto I.

THE MISERIES OF INDOLENCE.

"Ye impious wretches," quoth the knight in wrath
"Your happiness behold!"—Then straight a wand
He waved, an anti-magic power that hath
Truth from illusive falsehood to command.
Sudden the landskip sinks on every hand;
The pure quick streams are marshy puddles found;
On baleful heaths the groves all blacken'd stand;
And, o'er the weedy foul abhorred ground,
Snakes, adders, toads, each loathsome creature, crawls around.

And here and there, on trees by lightning scathed,
Unhappy wights who loathed life yhung;
Or, in fresh gore and recent murder bathed,
They weltering lay; or else, infuriate flung
Into the gloomy flood, while ravens sung
The funeral dirge, they down the torrent roll'd:
These, by distemper'd blood to madness stung,
Had doom'd themselves; whence oft, when night controll'd
The world, returning hither their sad spirits howl'd.

Meantime a moving scene was open laid;
That lazar-house, I whilom in my lay,
Depainted have, its horrors deep display'd,
And gave unnumber'd wretches to the day,
Who tossing there in squalid misery lay.
Soon as of sacred light th' unwonted smile
Pour'd on these living catacombs its ray,
Though the drear caverns stretching many a mile,
The sick up-raised their heads, and dropp'd their woes awhile.

"O, heaven! (they cried) and do we once more see
Yon blessed sun, and this green earth so fair?
Are we from noisome damps of pest-house free?
And drink our souls the sweet ethereal air?
O, thou! or knight, or god! who holdest there
That fiend, oh, keep him in eternal chains!
But what for us, the children of despair,
Brought to the brink of hell, what hope remains?
Repentance does itself but aggravate our pains."

From The Castle of Indolence: Canto II.

He was born in Caermarthenshire, Wales, in 1700, and was educated at Westminster School, after which he devoted himself to the profession of a painter; but he studied the sister art of poetry as well as painting, and in 1727 published Grongar Hill. In the pursuit of excellence in his professional art, he travelled to Italy, and on his return to England in 1740, he published The Ruins of Rome. After this he married a lady of the name of Ensor, whose grandmother, as he tells us, "was a Shakspeare, descended from a brother of every body's Shakspeare;" and abandoning at the same time his pictorial occupation, he entered into holy orders, and became an humble curate. In 1757 he published his chief poem, The Fleece, and died in the following year. The popularity of Dyer has scarcely been equal to his merits, although some of his own contemporaries could appreciate and acknowledge them; and Akenside, an incontestable judge of poetical excellence, declared, that "he would regulate his opinion of the reigning taste by the fate of Dyer's Fleece."

RECOMMENDATION OF BRITISH INDUSTRY.

Gold cannot gold appear, until man's toil
Discloses wide the mountain's hidden ribs,
And digs the dusky ore, and breaks and grinds
Its gritty parts, and laves in limpid streams,
With oft-repeated toil, and oft in fire
The metal purifies: with the fatigue,
And tedious process of its painful works,
The lusty sicken, and the feeble die.
But cheerful are the labours of the loom,
By health and ease accompanied: they bring
Superior treasures speedier to the state,
Than those of deep Peruvian mines, where slaves
(Wretched requital) drink, with trembling hand,
Pale palsy's baneful cup. Our happy swains
Behold arising, in their fattening flocks,
A double wealth; more rich than Belgium's boast,
Who tends the culture of the flaxen reed;
Or the Cathayan's, whose ignobler care
Nurses the silkworm; or of India's sons,
Who plant the cotton-grove by Ganges' stream.
Nor do their toils and products furnish more,
Than gauds and dresses, of fantastic web,
To the luxurious: but our kinder toils
Give clothing to necessity; keep warm
Th' unhappy wanderer, on the mountain wild
Benighted, while the tempest beats around.
No, ye soft sons of Ganges, and of Ind,
Ye feebly delicate, life little needs
Your feminine toys, nor asks your nerveless arm
To cast the strong-flung shuttle, or the spear.
Can ye defend your country from the storm

Of strong invasion? Can ye want endure,
In the besieged fort, with courage firm?
Can ye the weather-beaten vessel steer,
Climb the tall mast, direct the stubborn helm,
Mid wild discordant waves, with steady course?
Can ye lead out, to distant colonies,
Th' o'erflowings of a people, or your wrong'd
Brethren, by impious persecution driven,
And arm their breasts with fortitude to try
New regions; climes, though barren, yet beyond
The baneful power of tyrants? These are deeds
To which their hardy labours well prepare
The sinewy arm of Albion's sons. Pursue,
Ye sons of Albion, with a yielding heart,
Your hardy labours: let the sounding loom
Mix with the melody of every vale;
The loom, that long-renown'd, wide-envied gift
Of wealthy Flandria, who the boon received
From fair Venetia; she from Grecian nymphs;
They from Phenicé, who obtain'd the dole
From old Ægyptus. Thus around the globe,
The golden-footed sciences their path
Mark, like the sun, enkindling life and joy;
And follow'd close by Ignorance and Pride,
Lead Day and Night o'er realms.

From The Fleece: Book III.

PROSPECT FROM GRONGAR HILL.

Now, I gain the mountain's brow,
What a landscape lies below!
No clouds, no vapours, intervene;
But the gay, the open scene,
Does the face of Nature show,
In all the hues of heaven's bow!
And, swelling to embrace the light,
Spreads around beneath the sight
Old castles on the cliffs arise,
Proudly towering in the skies!
Rushing from the woods, the spires
Seem from hence ascending fires!
Half his beams Apollo sheds
On the yellow mountain heads!
Gilds the fleeces of the flocks,
And glitters on the broken rocks!

Below me trees unnumber'd rise,
Beautiful in various dyes:
The gloomy pine, the poplar blue,
The yellow beech, the sable yew,
The slender fir that taper grows,
The sturdy oak with broad-spread boughs.
And beyond the purple grove,
Haunt of Phyllis, Queen of Love!
Gaudy as the opening dawn,
Lies a long and level lawn,
On which a dark hill, steep and high,
Holds and charms the wandering eye!
Deep are his feet in Towy's flood,
His sides are clothed with waving wood,
And ancient towers crown his brow,
That cast an awful look below;
Whose ragged walls the ivy creeps,
And with her arms from falling keeps;
So both a safety from the wind
On mutual dependence find.
'Tis now the raven's bleak abode;
'Tis now th' apartment of the toad;
And there the fox securely feeds;
And there the poisonous adder breeds,
Conceal'd in ruins, moss, and weeds;
While, ever and anon, there falls
Huge heaps of hoary moulder'd walls.
Yet time has seen, that lifts the low,
And level lays the lofty brow,
Has seen this broken pile complete,
Big with the vanity of state;
But transient is the smile of fate!
A little rule, a little sway,
A sunbeam in a winter's day,
Is all the proud and mighty have
Between the cradle and the grave.
And see the rivers how they run,
Through woods and meads, in shade and sun,
Sometimes swift, sometimes slow,
Wave succeeding wave, they go
A various journey to the deep,
Like human life to endless sleep!
Thus is Nature's vesture wrought,
To instruct our wandering thought;
Thus she dresses green and gay,
To disperse our cares away.

Ever charming, ever new,
When will the landscape tire the view?
The fountain's fall, the river's flow,
The woody valleys, warm and low;
The windy summit, wild and high,
Roughly rushing on the sky!
The pleasant seat, the ruin'd tower,
The naked rock, the shady bower;
The town and village, dome and farm,
Each give each a double charm,
As pearls upon an Æthiop's arm.

FROM THE RUINS OF ROME.

—— Yet once again, my Muse,
Yet once again, and soar a loftier flight;
Lo! the resistless theme, imperial Rome.
Fall'n, fall'n, a silent heap; her heroes all
Sunk in their urns; behold the pride of pomp,
The throne of nations fall'n; obscured in dust;
Ev'n yet majestical: the solemn scene
Elates the soul, while now the rising sun
Flames on the ruins in the purer air
Towering aloft, upon the glittering plain,
Like broken rocks, a vast circumference;
Rent palaces, crush'd columns, rifled moles,
Fanes roll'd on fanes, and tombs on buried tombs.
Deep lies in dust the Theban obelisk
Immense along the waste; minuter art,
Gliconian forms, or Phidian, subtly fair,
O'erwhelming; as th' immense Leviathan
The finny brood, when near Ierne's shore
Outstretch'd, unwieldy, his island length appears
Above the foamy flood. Globose and huge,
Grey mouldering temples swell, and wide o'ercast
The solitary landscape, hills and woods,
And boundless wilds; while the vine-mantled brows
The pendent goats unveil, regardless they
Of hourly peril, though the-clifted domes
Tremble to every wind. The pilgrim oft
At dead of night, 'mid his oraison, hears
Aghast the voice of time, disparting towers,
Tumbling all precipitate down-dash'd,
Rattling around, loud thundering to the moon;
While murmurs soothe each awful interval
Of ever-falling waters.

Of the personal history of this poet, whose writings do not seem to have been known proportionably to their deserts, very little can be ascertained. He was probably born about the year 1700, and studied at Christ Church, Oxford, where he took his degree of Master of Arts. His views being directed to the church, he entered into orders, and was appointed Vicar of Starting, in Sussex, where he died in 1744. His Man of Taste is a biting satire upon the gentlemen of fashion and vertû of his own day. Besides this poem, he wrote The Crooked Sixpence, in imitation of Philips's Splendid Shilling; and a political satire, entitled, The Art of Politics.

FROM THE MAN OF TASTE.

But not to writings I confine my pen,
I have a taste for buildings, music, men.
Young travell'd coxcombs mighty knowledge boast,
With superficial smattering at most.
Not so my mind, unsatisfied with hints,
Knows more than Budgell writes, or Roberts prints.
I know the town, all houses I have seen,
From Hyde-Park corner down to Bednal-Green.
Sure wretched Wren was taught by bungling Jones,
To murder mortar, and disfigure stones!
Who in Whitehall can symmetry discern?
I reckon Covent-Garden church a barn.
Nor hate I less thy vile cathedral, Paul!
The choir's too big, the cupola's too small:
Substantial walls and heavy roofs I like,
'Tis Vanbrugh's structures that my fancy strike:
Such noble ruins every pile would make,
I wish they'd tumble for the prospect's sake.
To lofty Chelsea, or to Greenwich dome,
Soldiers and sailors all are welcomed home.
Her poor to palaces Britannia brings,
St. James's hospital may serve for kings.
Buildings so happily I understand,
That for one house I'd mortgage all my land.
Doric, Ionic, shall not there be found,
But it shall cost me threescore thousand pound.
From out my honest workmen I'll select
A bricklayer, and proclaim him architect;
First bid him build me a stupendous dome,
Which having finish'd, we set out for Rome;
Take a week's view of Venice and the Brent;
Stare round, see nothing, and come home content.
I'll have my villa, too, a sweet abode,
Its situation shall be London road:

Pots o'er the door I'll place like cit's balconies,
Which Bentley calls the gardens of Adonis.
I'll have my gardens in the fashion too,
For what is beautiful that is not new?
Fair four-legg'd temples, theatres that vie
With all the angles of a Christmas-pie.
Does it not merit the beholder's praise,
What 's high to sink, and what is low to raise?
Slopes shall ascend where once a green-house stood,
And in my horse-pond I will plant a wood.
Let misers dread the hoarded gold to waste,
Expense and alteration shows a taste.
In curious paintings I'm exceeding nice,
And know their several beauties by their price.
Auctions and sales I constantly attend,
But choose my pictures by a skilful friend.
Originals and copies much the same,
The picture's value is the painter's name.
My taste in sculpture from my choice is seen,
I buy no statues that are not obscene.
In spite of Addison and ancient Rome,
Sir Cloudesley Shovel's is my favourite tomb.
How oft have I with admiration stood,
To view some city magistrate in wood!
I gaze with pleasure on a lord-mayor's head,
Cast with propriety in gilded lead.
Oh could I view, through London as I pass,
Some broad Sir Balaam in Corinthian brass:
High on a pedestal, ye freemen, place
His magisterial paunch and griping face;
Letter'd and gilt, let him adorn Cheapside,
And grant the tradesman what a king's denied.
Old coins and medals I collect, 'tis true;
Sir Andrew has 'em, and I'll have 'em too.
But among friends, if I the truth might speak,
I like the modern, and despise th' antique.
Though in the drawers of my japan bureau,
To lady Gripeall I the Cæsars show,
'Tis equal to her ladyship or me,
A copper Otho, or a Scotch bawbee.
Without Italian, or without an ear,
To Bononcini's music I adhere;
Music has charms to soothe a savage breast,
And therefore proper at a sheriff's feast.
My soul has oft a secret pleasure found
In the harmonious bagpipe's lofty sound.

Bagpipes for men, shrill German-flutes for boys,
I'm English born, and love a grumbling noise.
The stage should yield the solemn organ's note,
And Scripture tremble in the eunuch's throat.
Let Senesino sing what David writ,
And hallelujahs charm the pious pit.
Eager in throngs the town to Esther came,
And oratorio was a lucky name.
Thou, Heidegger! the English taste hast found,
And rul'st the mob of quality with sound.
In Lent, if masquerades displease the town,
Call 'em ridottos, and they still go down.
Go on, prince Phiz! to please the British nation,
Call thy next masquerade a convocation.
Bears, lions, wolves, and elephants, I breed,
And Philosophical Transactions read.
Next lodge I'll be Freemason, nothing less,
Unless I happen to be F. R. S.
I have a palate, and (as yet) two ears,
Fit company for porters or for peers.
Of every useful knowledge I've a share,
But my top talent is a bill of fare.
Sirloins and rumps of beef offend my eyes,
Pleased with frogs fricasseed, and coxcomb-pies;
Dishes I choose, though little, yet genteel,
Snails the first course, and peepers crown the meal.
Pigs' heads, with hair on, much my fancy please;
I love young cauliflow'rs if stew'd in cheese,
And give ten guineas for a pint of peas.
Oh, could a British barony be sold!
I would bright honour buy with dazzling gold.
Could I the privilege of peer procure,
The rich I'd bully, and oppress the poor.
To give is wrong, but it is wronger still
On any terms to pay a tradesman's bill.
I'd make the insolent mechanics stay,
And keep my ready money all for play.
I'd try if any pleasure could be found
In tossing up for twenty thousand pound:
Had I whole counties, I to White's would go,
And set land, woods, and rivers, at a throw.
But should I meet with an unlucky run,
And at a throw be gloriously undone;
My debts of honour I'd discharge the first;
Let all my lawful creditors be cursed;
My title would preserve me from arrest,
And seizing hired horses is a jest.

This writer of poetry, history, and sermons, was born, it is probable, about 1700. He was educated at Marlborough College, and took his degree of Master of Arts at Oxford. His first attempt at authorship was in 1727, when he published a collection of Poems, most of which he boasted he had composed when he was under the age of nineteen. He afterwards published an Essay on Satire, and another on Reason, in both of which he is supposed to have been assisted by Pope. Among his other literary labours, Harte was persuaded to write a life of the renowned Gustavus Adolphus, for which purpose he collected an immense quantity of materials during several years of research, chiefly upon the continent; but when the work was published, the style was so obscure and so vitiated with foreign idioms, as to be utterly unpalatable to the precise and formal taste of his own day. Now, however, that historical accuracy is valued for its own sake, Harte's History of Gustavus is prized as it ought to be, and is continually increasing in popularity. He died in 1774. The poetry of Harte is generally uncouth and pedantic, but in many instances it evinces deep thought, and affords food for important reflection.

EXAMPLES OF THE GREAT WHO RETIRED FROM THE WORLD.

Why dwells my unoffended eye
On yon blank desert's trackless waste;
All dreary earth, or cheerless sky,
Like ocean wild, and bleak, and vast?
There Lysidor's enamour'd reed
Ne'er taught the plains Eudosia's praise:
There herds were rarely known to feed,
Or birds to sing, or flocks to graze.
Yet does my soul complacence find;
All, all from thee,
Supremely gracious Deity,
Corrector of the mind!

Scipio sought virtue in his prime,
And, having early gain'd the prize,
Stole from th' ungrateful world in time,
Contented to be low and wise!
He served the state with zeal and force,
And then with dignity retired;
Dismounting from th' unruly horse,
To rule himself, as sense required,
Without a sigh, he power resign'd.——
All, all from thee,
Supremely gracious Deity,
Corrector of the mind!

When Diocletian sought repose,
Cloy'd and fatigued with nauseous power,
He left his empire to his foes,
For fools t' admire, and rogues devour:

Rich in his poverty, he bought
Retirement's innocence and health;
With his own hands the monarch wrought,
And changed a throne for Ceres' wealth.
Toil soothed his cares, his blood refined——
And all from thee,
Supremely gracious Deity,
Composer of the mind!

He, who had ruled the world, exchanged
His sceptre for the peasant's spade,
Postponing (as through groves he ranged)
Court splendour to the rural shade.
Child of his hand, th' engrafted thorn
More than the victor laurel pleased:
Heart's-ease, and meadow-sweet, adorn
The brow, from civic garlands eased.
Fortune, however poor, was kind.——
All, all from thee,
Supremely gracious Deity,
Corrector of the mind!

Thus Charles, with justice styled the Great
For valour, piety, and laws;
Resign'd two empires to retreat,
And from a throne to shades withdraws;
In vain (to sooth a monarch's pride)
His yoke the willing Persian bore:
In vain the Saracen complied,
And fierce Northumbrians stain'd with gore.
One Gallic farm his cares confined;
And all from thee,
Supremely gracious Deity,
Composer of the mind!

Observant of th' Almighty will,
Prescient in faith, and pleased with toil,
Abram Chaldea left, to till
The moss-grown Haran's flinty soil:
Hydras of thorns absorb'd his gain,
The commonwealth of weeds rebell'd,
But labour tamed th' ungrateful plain,
And famine was by art repell'd;
Patience made churlish nature kind.——
All, all from thee,
Supremely gracious Deity,
Corrector of the mind!

A FREQUENT and very foolish scruple has been often entertained about admitting this author into the list of British poets. We conceive that such fastidiousness was greatly out of place. The popular feeling of a whole century has cherished Blair's Grave as a standard poetical work, and a suffrage of this nature is a sufficient refutation of whole volumes of carping criticism.

Robert Blair was born about the beginning of the seventeenth century. His father, the Rev. David Blair, was one of the ministers of Edinburgh and a chaplain to the king. The author of The Grave was destined to the Scottish church, and received his education at the University of Edinburgh, and in 1731, he was ordained minister of Athelstaneford, in East Lothian. His fortune, independently of his profession, was comfortable, and his ambition moderate, so that he "never changed nor wished to change his place;" accordingly, he attached himself to his humble charge for life, and combined in his own person the two happiest states—that of a country gentleman and a rural divine. He was distinguished, not only by devotedness to his clerical duties and the affection of his parishioners, but by his love of elegant and philosophical studies, among which may be mentioned botany and optics, in which he made great proficiency. He married Isabella Law, daughter of Mr. Law of Elvingstone, who was Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, and with this lady, who was distinguished by remarkable beauty and amiable manners, he realized such a life of substantial happiness, as seldom falls to the lot of poets. His death occurred on the 4th of February, 1746, in the forty-seventh year of his age, and he was succeeded in his clerical charge by John Home, the distinguished author of the tragedy of Douglas.

Blair was the author of a few poetical incidental pieces, but the superior merits of The Grave have entirely eclipsed them. Of this admirable poem he gives the following modest statement, addressed to Dr. Doddridge:—"I have desired Dr. Watts to transmit you a manuscript poem of mine, entitled *The Grave*, written, I hope, in a way not unbecoming my profession as a minister of the gospel, though the greatest part of it was composed several years before I was clothed with so sacred a character. I was urged by some friends here, to whom I showed it, to make it public; nor did I decline it, provided I had the approbation of Dr. Watts, from whom I have received many civilities, and for whom I had ever entertained the highest regard. Yesterday I had a letter from the doctor, signifying his approbation of the piece in a manner most obliging. A great deal less from him would have done me no small honour. But, at the same time, he mentions to me, that he had offered it to two booksellers of his acquaintance, who, he tells me, did not care to run the risk of publishing it. They can scarcely think (considering how critical an age we live in, with respect to such kind of writings) that a person living three hundred miles from London could write so as to be acceptable to the fashionable and polite. Perhaps it may be so; though at the same time, I must say, in order to make it more generally liked, I was obliged sometimes to go cross to my own inclination, well knowing, that whatever poem is written on a serious argument, must, on that very account, be under peculiar disadvantages; and therefore proper arts must be used to make such a piece go down with a licentious age, which cares for none of those things. I beg pardon for breaking in on moments precious as yours, and hope you will be so kind as to give me your opinion of the poem."

When the Grave first made its appearance, the misgivings of Blair were in a great measure realized. It grated upon the nerves of the public like a death-bell, and even those who could be charmed with good poetry, could scarcely forgive the author for the high religious tone he had adopted. The theme was, indeed, too solemn for a frivolous age: the verse was, therefore, complained of as being stiff, and the language, in many cases, vulgar and affected. But a short time sufficed to free the poem from these hypercritical aspersions, and it was soon universally felt and conceded that, as a religious poem, it was scarcely inferior to any in the English language, and might be placed by the side of the Night Thoughts, which had probably inspired it.



BLAIR.

THE CHURCH AND CHURCHYARD.

See yonder hallow'd fane! the pious work
Of names once famed, now dubious or forgot,
And buried 'midst the wreck of things which were;
There lie interr'd the more illustrious dead.
The wind is up: hark! how it howls! methinks,
Till now I never heard a sound so dreary.
Doors creak, and windows clap, and night's foul bird,
Rook'd in the spire, screams loud; the gloomy aisles
Black plaster'd, and hung round with shreds or 'scutcheons
And tatter'd coats of arms, send back the sound
Laden with heavier airs, from the low vaults,
The mansions of the dead. Roused from their slumbers,
In grim array the grizly spectres rise,
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Grin horrible, and obstinately sullen

Pass and repass, hush'd as the foot of night.
Again the screech-owl shrieks: ungracious sound!
I 'll hear no more; it makes one's blood run chill.
Quite round the pile, a row of rev'rend elms,
Coeval near with that, all ragged show,
Long lash'd by the rude winds: some rift half down
Their branchless trunks: others so thin a-top
That scarce two crows could lodge in the same tree.
Strange things, the neighbours say, have happen'd here:
Wild shrieks have issued from the hollow tombs;
Dead men have come again and walk'd about;
And the great bell has toll'd, unrung, untouch'd.
Such tales their cheer, at wake or gossiping,
When it draws near to witching time of night.
Oft in the lone churchyard at night I 've seen,
By glimpse of moonshine, chequ'ring through the trees,
The schoolboy, with his satchel in his hand,
Whistling aloud to bear his courage up,
And lightly tripping o'er the long flat stones
(With nettles skirted, and with moss o'ergrown)
That tell in homely phrase who lie below.
Sudden he starts! and hears, or thinks he hears,
The sound of something purring at his heels:
Full fast he flies, and dares not look behind him,
Till out of breath he overtakes his fellows;
Who gather round, and wonder at the tale
Of horrid apparition, tall and ghastly,
That walks at dead of night, or takes his stand
O'er some new-open'd grave; and, strange to tell!
Evanishes at crowing of the cock.
The new-made widow, too, I 've sometimes spied,
Sad sight! slow moving o'er the prostrate dead:
Listless she crawls along in doleful black,
While bursts of sorrow gush from either eye,
Fast falling down her now-untasted cheek.
Prone on the lonely grave of the dear man
She drops; while busy meddling memory,
In barbarous succession, musters up
The past endearments of their softer hours,
Tenacious of its theme. Still, still she thinks
She sees him, and indulging the fond thought,
Clings yet more closely to the senseless turf,
Nor heeds the passenger who looks that way.

From The Grave.

THE RICH MAN'S FUNERAL.

But see! the well-plumed hearse comes nodding on,
Stately and slow; and properly attended
By the whole sable tribe, that painful watch
The sick man's door, and live upon the dead,
By letting out their persons by the hour
To mimic sorrow, when the heart's not sad.
How rich the trappings, now they 're all unfurl'd
And glitt'ring in the sun! triumphant entries
Of conquerors and coronation pomps
In glory scarce exceed. Great gluts of people
Retard th' unwieldy show; whilst from the casements,
And houses' tops, ranks behind ranks, close wedged,
Hang bellying o'er. But tell us, why this waste?
Why this ado in earthing up a carcase
That 's fall'n into disgrace, and in the nostril
Smells horrible? Ye undertakers! tell us,
'Midst all the gorgeous figures you exhibit,
Why is the principal conceal'd, for which
You make this mighty stir? 'Tis wisely done;
What would offend the eye in a good picture,
The painter casts discreetly into shade.
Proud lineage! now how little thou appear'st!
Below the envy of the private man!
Honour, that meddlesome officious ill,
Pursues thee e'en to death; nor there stops short:
Strange persecution! when the grave itself
Is no protection from rude sufferance.

From The Grave.

THE GRAVE A UNIVERSAL LEVELLER.

Beauty! thou pretty plaything! dear deceit!
That steals so softly o'er the stripling's heart,
And gives it a new pulse unknown before,
The grave discredits thee: thy charms expunged,
Thy roses faded, and thy lilies soil'd,
What hast thou more to boast of? Will thy lovers
Flock round thee now, to gaze and do thee homage?
Methinks I see thee with thy head low laid:
Whilst surfeited upon thy damask cheek,
The high-fed worm, in lazy volumes roll'd,
Riots unscared. For this was all thy caution?

For this thy painful labours at thy glass,
T' improve those charms, and keep them in repair,
For which the spoiler thanks thee not? Foul feeder!
Coarse fare and carrion please thee full as well,
And leave as keen a relish on the sense.
Look, how the fair one weeps! the conscious tears
Stand thick as dewdrops on the bells of flowers:
Honest effusion! the swoln heart in vain
Works hard to put a gloss on its distress.
Strength, too! thou surly and less gentle boast
Of those that laugh loud at the village ring!
A fit of common sickness pulls thee down
With greater ease than e'er thou didst the stripling
That rashly dared thee to th' unequal fight.
What groan was that I heard? deep groan indeed!
With anguish heavy laden! let me trace it:
From yonder bed it comes, where the strong man,
By stronger arm belabour'd, gasps for breath
Like a hard-hunted beast. How his great heart
Beats thick! his roomy chest by far too scant
To give the lungs full play. What now avail
The strong-built sinewy limbs, and well-spread shoulders?
See how he tugs for life, and lays about him,
Mad with his pain! eager he catches hold
Of what comes next to hand, and grasps it hard,
Just like a creature drowning! hideous sight!
O how his eyes stand out, and stare full ghastly!
While the distemper's rank and deadly venom
Shoots like a burning arrow 'cross his bowels,
And drinks his marrow up. Heard you that groan?
It was his last. See how the great Goliath,
Just like a child that brawl'd itself to rest,
Lies still. What mean'st thou then, O mighty boaster,
To vaunt of nerves of thine? What means the bull,
Unconscious of his strength, to play the coward,
And flee before a feeble thing like man;
That knowing well the slackness of his arm,
Trusts only in the well-invented knife!
With study pale, and midnight vigils spent,
The star-surveying sage close to his eye
Applies the sight-invigorating tube,
And travelling through the boundless length of space
Marks well the courses of the far-seen orbs,
That roll with regular confusion there,
In ecstacy of thought. But ah! proud man!
Great heights are hazardous to the weak head:
Soon, very soon, thy firmest footing fails,

And down thou dropp'st into that darksome place,
Where nor device nor knowledge ever came.
Here the tongue-warrior lies! disabled now,
Disarm'd, dishonour'd, like a wretch that 's gagg'd,
And cannot tell his ail to passers-by.
Great man of language, whence this mighty change,
This dumb despair, and drooping of the head?
Though strong Persuasion hung upon thy lip,
And sly Insinuation's softer arts
In ambush lay about thy flowing tongue.
Alas! how chop-fall'n now! thick mists and silence
Rest, like a weary cloud, upon thy breast
Unceasing. Ah! where is the lifted arm,
The strength of action, and the force of words,
The well-turn'd period, and the well-tuned voice,
With all the lesser ornaments of phrase?
Ah! fled for ever, as they ne'er had been!
Rased from the book of fame: or, more provoking,
Perhaps some hackney hunger-bitten scribbler
Insults thy memory, and blots thy tomb
With long flat narrative, or duller rhymes,
With heavy halting pace that drawl along:
Enough to rouse a dead man into rage,
And warm, with red resentment, the wan cheek.

From The Grave.

DEATH AND ITS CONSEQUENCE.

Sure 'tis a serious thing to die! My soul!
What a strange moment must it be, when near
The journey's end, thou hast the gulf in view!
That awful gulf no mortal e'er repass'd
To tell what 's doing on the other side!
Nature runs back and shudders at the sight,
And every life-string bleeds at thoughts of parting:
For part they must: body and soul must part;
Fond couple! link'd more close than wedded pair.
This wings its way to its Almighty Source,
The witness of its actions, now its judge;
That drops into the dark and noisome grave,
Like a disabled pitcher of no use.
If death were nothing, and nought after death;
If when men died, at once they ceased to be,
Returning to the barren womb of nothing,
Whence first they sprung; then might the debauchee,
Untrembling, mouth the heavens; then might the drunkard

Reel over his full bowl, and when 'tis drain'd
Fill up another to the brim, and laugh
At the poor bugbear Death; then might the wretch
Who 's weary of the world, and tired of life,
At once give each inquietude the slip,
By stealing out of being when he pleased,
And by that way, whether by hemp or steel:
Death's thousand doors stand open. Who could force
The ill-pleased guest to sit out his full time,
Or blame him if he goes? Sure he does well
That helps himself as timely as he can,
When able. But if there 's an hereafter,
And that there is, conscience, uninfluenced
And suffer'd to speak out, tells every man,
Then must it be an awful thing to die.

From The Grave.

DEATH OF THE GOOD MAN.

—— Sure the last end
Of the good man is peace! How calm his exit!
Night-dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary worn-out winds expire so soft.
Behold him in the evening-tide of life,
A life well spent, whose early care it was
His riper years should not upbraid his green:
By unperceived degrees he wears away;
Yet, like the sun, seems larger at his setting.
High in his faith and hopes, look how he reaches
After the prize in view! and, like a bird
That 's hamper'd, struggles hard to get away:
While the glad gates of sight are wide expanded
To let new glories in, the first fair fruits
Of the last-coming harvest. Then, O then!
Each earth-born joy grows vile, or disappears,
Shrunk to a thing of nought. O how he longs
To have his passport sign'd, and be dismiss'd!
'Tis done, and now he 's happy! The glad soul
Has not a wish uncrown'd. E'en the lag flesh
Rests too in hope of meeting once again
Its better half, never to sunder more.
Nor shall it hope in vain: the time draws on
When not a single spot of burial earth,
Whether on land or in the spacious sea,
But must give back its long-committed dust
Inviolate.

From The Grave.

Was born at Dublin, in 1708, and was the son of a dissenting minister in that city. He was first educated at a private school in Dublin, and then sent to the University of Glasgow; but there, by entering into an improvident marriage before he had reached his twentieth year, he marred his future prospects of success in the world. A life of dissipation and recklessness ensued, and although his poetical talents procured him influential friends, who would have exerted themselves in his behalf, his indolence and excesses negatived all their efforts. He was, in short, an odious impersonation of the worst qualities of Savage. After a life of thoughtlessness, meanness, and suffering, intermingled with paroxysms of repentance and remorse, he died worn out by excesses in May, 1749. His poetry, which was scattered through several periodicals, would, if collected, form several bulky volumes; but his chief poem, The Deity, shows us of what excellence he would have been capable, if his mind had been under the control of better habits and principles.

EPISTLE TO HENRY BROOKE, Esq.

AUTHOR OF GUSTAVUS VASA.

Though 'midst the cruel storm of passion tost,
I view the shore, and sigh for safety lost,
While every distant hope of good is gone,
And, left by thee, 'tis joy to be undone;
Oh! read the thought where no design has part,
The last faint purpose of my wretched heart;
Long had between us (in a moment torn)
The holy band of friendship's faith been worn:
I claim'd the bliss, so happy once was I,
Dear to your breast, and cherish'd in your eye:
Now lost the privilege, shall one short day
Snatch all the labour of our lives away?
But oh, I err! I am not what I seem,
Friendship can ne'er subsist without esteem;
Death were my choice, if Heaven my choice approved,
More easy than to lose the friend I loved:
Happy in this, that to your better care
I gave a friend, will never lose his share;
Whose truth will still increase, the longer known,
Whose faith, whose goodness, are so like your own:
Forget, I bless you,—if this wish succeeds,
Then live Gustavus, though Arvida bleeds.

THE REDEEMER.

Advance, thou hopeless mortal, steel'd in guilt,
Behold, and if thou canst, forbear to melt!
Shall Jesus die thy freedom to regain,
And wilt thou drag the voluntary chain?

Wilt thou refuse thy kind assent to give,
When dying he looks down to bid thee live?
Perverse, wilt thou reject the proffer'd good,
Bought with his life, and streaming in his blood?
Whose virtue can thy deepest crimes efface,
Re-heal thy nature, and confirm thy peace!
Can all the errors of thy life atone,
And raise thee from a rebel, to a son?
O blest Redeemer, from thy sacred throne,
Where saints and angels sing thy triumphs won!
(Where from the grave thou raised thy glorious head,
Chain'd to thy car the powers infernal led)
From that exalted height of bliss supreme,
Look down on those who bear thy sacred name;
Restore their ways, inspire them by thy grace,
Thy laws to follow, and thy steps to trace;
Thy bright example to thy doctrine join,
And by their morals prove their faith divine!
Nor only to thy church confine thy ray,
O'er the glad world thy healing light display;
Fair Sun of Righteousness! in beauty rise,
And clear the mists that cloud the mental skies!
To Judah's remnant, now a scatter'd train,
Oh great Messiah! show thy promised reign;
O'er earth as wide, thy saving warmth diffuse,
As spreads the ambient air, or falling dews,
And haste the time when, vanquish'd by thy power,
Death shall expire, and sin defile no more!

From Deity.

TO MRS. OLDFIELD: ON HER ACTING CLEOPATRA.

Oft has my soul with strong compassion strove,
To think of Antony's ill-fated love;
To see him shrink before th' ambitious boy,
Fame, life, and honour, given for transient joy!
Thus once I thought—but now my error see,
And the lost hero stands absolved by thee.
Had Cleopatra's charms like Oldfield's shone!
Had she the tuneful magic of thy tongue!
Well might the Roman of his softness boast,
And think that love atoned for empire lost:
Well might he from the glorious war remove,
And barter crowns and provinces for love!
For oh! who would not make the fate his own?
And wish to be so gloriously undone!

THIS laureate of the healing art was born at Castleton, in Roxburghshire, about 1709, and was the son of the parish minister. After the usual routine of education pursued in the Scottish schools, he was sent to the University of Edinburgh, to perfect himself in classical learning, and study the several branches of philosophy and medicine, which he did with great reputation. Having taken his degree of Doctor, he went to London, and commenced practice as a physician, but with indifferent success. This circumstance, combined with his natural vein of sarcastic wit, produced from him certain fugitive essays and dialogues connected with the study of physic, in which he happily ridiculed the medical errors and prejudices of the day.

It was from poetry, however, that Armstrong was to derive his chief celebrity, although his first publication in that department was rather inauspicious. This was, his Economy of Love, in which he displayed all the elegance, and more than the licentiousness, of Ovid. At a later period of his life, indeed, he endeavoured to counteract the evil tendencies of the work, by publishing a castigated edition; but the whole subject was too thoroughly imbued with a prurient fancy, to be purified by any process of pruning. His next production, of still higher poetical merit, and of a very different moral tendency from the former, established his poetical reputation upon a lasting basis. This was, his Art of Preserving Health, which he published in 1744. After this he continued to pursue his professional vocation, and write occasional poems, until his death, which occurred on the 7th of September, 1779. While most of the poetry of Armstrong has been forgotten, his Art of Preserving Health will always continue to hold a high place in English literature.

A HEALTHY SITE.

Meantime, the moist malignity to shun
Of burthen'd skies, mark where the dry champaign
Swells into cheerful hills; where Marjoram
And Thyme, the love of bees, perfume the air;
And where the Cynorrhodon with the rose
For fragrance vies; for in the thirsty soil
Most fragrant breathe the aromatic tribes.
There bid thy roofs high on the basking steep
Ascend, there light thy hospitable fires;
And let them see the winter morn arise,
The summer evening blushing in the west;
While with umbrageous oaks the ridge behind
O'erhung, defends you from the blust'ring north,
And bleak affliction of the peevish east.
O! when the growling winds contend, and all
The sounding forest fluctuates in the storm;
To sink in warm repose, and hear the din
Howl o'er the steady battlements, delights
Above the luxury of vulgar sleep.
The murmuring rivulet, and the hoarser strain
Of waters rushing o'er the slippery rocks,
Will nightly lull you to ambrosial rest.
To please the fancy is no trifling good,

Where health is studied; for whatever moves
The mind with calm delight, promotes the just
And natural movements of th' harmonious frame.
Besides, the sportive brook for ever shakes
The trembling air; that floats from hill to hill,
From vale to mountain, with incessant change
Of purest element, refreshing still
Your airy seat, and uninfected gods.
Chiefly for this I praise the man who builds
High on the breezy ridge, whose lofty sides
Th' ethereal deep with endless billows chafes.
His purer mansion nor contagious years
Shall reach, nor deadly putrid airs annoy.

From The Art of Preserving Health: Book I.

TRUE LUXURY.

Voluptuous Man
Is by superior faculties misled;
Misled from pleasure even in quest of joy.
Sated with Nature's boons, what thousands seek,
With dishes tortured from their native taste,
And mad variety, to spur beyond
Its wiser will the jaded appetite!
Is this for pleasure? Learn a juster taste;
And know that temperance is true luxury.
Or is it pride? Pursue some nobler aim.
Dismiss your parasites, who praise for hire;
And earn the fair esteem of honest men,
Whose praise is Fame. Form'd of such clay as yours,
The sick, the needy, shiver at your gates.
Even modest want may bless your hand unseen,
Though hush'd in patient wretchedness at home.
Is there no virgin, graced with every charm
But that which binds the mercenary vow?
No youth of genius, whose neglected bloom
Unfoster'd sickens in the barren shade;
No worthy man, by fortune's random blows,
Or by a heart too generous and humane,
Constrain'd to leave his happy natal seat,
And sigh for wants more bitter than his own?
There are, while human miseries abound,
A thousand ways to waste superfluous wealth,
Without one fool or flatterer at your board,
Without one hour of sickness or disgust.

From The Art of Preserving Health: Book II.

NIGHT-MARE.

Oppress not Nature sinking down to rest
With feasts too late, too solid, or too full:
But be the first concoction half-matured
Ere you to mighty indolence resign
Your passive faculties. He from the toils
And troubles of the day to heavier toil
Retires, whom trembling from the tower that rocks
Amid the clouds, or Calpe's hideous height,
The busy demons hurl; or in the main
O'erwhelm; or bury struggling under ground.
Not all a monarch's luxury the woes
Can counterpoise of that most wretched man,
Whose nights are shaken with the frantic fits
Of wild Orestes; whose delirious brain,
Stung by the Furies, works with poison'd thought:
While pale and monstrous painting shocks the soul;
And mangled consciousness bemoans itself
For ever torn; and chaos floating round.

From the Art of Preserving Health: Book III.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SWEATING SICKNESS IN ENGLAND.

Ere yet the fell Plantagenets had spent
Their ancient rage, at Bosworth's purple field;
While, for which tyrant England should receive,
Her legions in incestuous murders mix'd,
And daily horrors; till the Fates were drunk
With kindred blood by kindred hands profused:
Another plague of more gigantic arm
Arose, a monster never known before,
Rear'd from Cocytus its portentous head;
This rapid Fury not, like other pests,
Pursued a gradual course, but in a day
Rush'd as a storm o'er half th' astonish'd isle,
And strew'd with sudden carcases the land.
First through the shoulders, or whatever part
Was seized the first, a fervid vapour sprung;
With rash combustion thence, the quivering spark
Shot to the heart, and kindled all within;
And soon the surface caught the spreading fires.
Through all the yielding pores, the melted blood

Gush'd out in smoky sweats; but nought assuaged
The torrid heat within, nor aught relieved
The stomach's anguish. With incessant toil,
Desperate of ease, impatient of their pain,
They toss'd from side to side. In vain the stream
Ran full and clear, they burnt and thirsted still.
The restless arteries with rapid blood
Beat strong and frequent. Thick and pantingly
The breath was fetch'd, and with huge lab'rings heaved.
At last a heavy pain oppress'd the head,
A wild delirium came; their weeping friends
Were strangers now, and this no home of theirs.
Harass'd with toil on toil, the sinking powers
Lay prostrate and o'erthrown; a ponderous sleep
Wrapt all the senses up: they slept and died.
  In some, a gentle horror crept at first
O'er all the limbs; the sluices of the skin
Withheld their moisture, till by art provoked
The sweats o'erflow'd; but in a clammy tide:
Now free and copious, now restrain'd and slow;
Of tinctures various, as the temperature
Had mix'd the blood; and rank with fetid steams:
As if the pent-up humours by delay
Were grown more fell, more putrid, and malign.
Here lay their hopes (though little hope remain'd);
With full effusion of perpetual sweats
To drive the venom out. And here the fates
Were kind, that long they linger'd not in pain.
For who survived the sun's diurnal race
Rose from the dreary gates of hell redeem'd:
Some the sixth hour oppress'd, and some the third.
  Of many thousands few untainted 'scaped;
Of those infected fewer 'scaped alive;
Of those who lived some felt a second blow;
And whom the second spared, a third destroy'd.
Frantic with fear, they sought by flight to shun
The fierce contagion. O'er the mournful land
Th' infected city pour'd her hurrying swarms:
Roused by the flames that fired her seats around,
Th' infected country rush'd into the town.
Some, sad at home, and in the desert some,
Abjured the fatal commerce of mankind;
In vain: where'er they fled, the Fates pursued.
Others, with hopes more specious, cross'd the main,
To seek protection in far distant skies;
But none they found. It seem'd the general air,
From pole to pole, from Atlas to the East,

Was then at enmity with English blood.
For, but the race of England, all were safe
In foreign climes; nor did this Fury taste
The foreign blood which England then contain'd.
Where should they fly? The circumambient heaven
Involved them still; and every breeze was bane.
Where find relief? The salutary art
Was mute; and startled at the new disease,
In fearful whispers hopeless omens gave.
To heaven with suppliant rites they sent their prayers:
Heaven heard them not. Of every hope deprived;
Fatigued with vain resources; and subdued
With woes resistless and enfeebling fear;
Passive they sunk beneath the weighty blow.
Nothing but lamentable sounds was heard,
Nor aught was seen but ghastly views of death.
Infectious horror ran from face to face,
And pale despair. 'Twas all the business then
To tend the sick, and in their turns to die.
In heaps they fell: and oft one bed, they say,
The sickening, dying, and the dead, contain'd.
Ye guardian Gods, on whom the fates depend
Of tottering Albion! ye eternal fires
That lead through heaven the wandering year! ye powers
That o'er th' encircling elements preside!
May nothing worse than what this age has seen
Arrive! Enough abroad, enough at home
Has Albion bled. Here a distemper'd heaven
Has thinn'd her cities, from those lofty cliffs
That awe proud Gaul, to Thulé's wintry reign;
While in the west, beyond the Atlantic foam,
Her bravest sons, keen for the fight, have died
The death of cowards and of common men:
Sunk void of wounds, and fall'n without renown.
But from these views the weeping muses turn,
And other themes invite my wandering song.

From The Art of Preserving Health: Book III.

Was the son of Sir Thomas Lyttelton, of Hagley, in Worcestershire, and was born in 1709. He was educated at Eton, and afterwards at Christ Church College, and at an early period displayed his talents by his writings both in prose and verse. He obtained a seat in Parliament, where he distinguished himself by a constant opposition to the minister, Walpole, and in 1737 he was appointed Secretary to the Prince of Wales, in which situation he was enabled to recommend several of his talented contemporaries to the patronage of his royal master. In 1741, he married Miss Lucy Fortescue, of Devonshire, with whom he lived in great happiness till her death, which happened five years afterwards, when he endeavoured to express and soothe his affliction by one of the most affecting domestic poems in the English language. In 1744, Lyttelton was appointed one of the Lords of the Treasury; in 1755, he was advanced to the rank of Chancellor of the Exchequer; and towards the end of the reign of George II., his political services were rewarded with a peerage. He died on the 22d of August, 1773.

Lord Lyttelton's poems were the lightest, and perhaps the least valuable, of his literary exertions. He wrote several prose works; among which the most distinguished are, his History of Henry II., and his Observations on the Conversion of St. Paul. The origin of the last work is often referred to. Lyttelton, while a young man, had become estranged from the Christian faith: but as he advanced in life, he felt the necessity of studying the important question with earnestness and impartiality. The result was, that he became a firm and devout believer, and his desire that others should become so, led to his celebrated work on the Conversion of St. Paul—a work that demonstrates the truth of Christianity with a cogency and conclusiveness which infidelity has never been able to answer.

FROM AN ELEGY TO THE MEMORY OF HIS WIFE.

At length escaped from every human eye,
From every duty, every care,
That in my mournful thoughts might claim a share,
Or force my tears their flowing stream to dry;
Beneath the gloom of this embowering shade,
This lone retreat, for tender sorrow made,
I now may give my burden'd heart relief,
  And pour forth all my stores of grief;
Of grief surpassing every other woe,
Far as the purest bliss, the happiest love
  Can on th' ennobled mind bestow,
  Exceeds the vulgar joys that move
Our gross desires, inelegant and low.

Ye tufted groves, ye gently-falling rills,
    Ye high o'ershadowing hills,
Ye lawns gay-smiling with eternal green,
    Oft have you my Lucy seen!
But never shall you now behold her more:
    Nor will she now with fond delight

And taste refined your rural charms explore.
Closed are those beauteous eyes in endless night,
Those beauteous eyes where beaming used to shine
Reason's pure light and Virtue's spark divine.

Oft would the Dryads of these woods rejoice
To hear her heavenly voice;
For her despising, when she deign'd to sing,
The sweetest songsters of the spring:
The woodlark and the linnet pleased no more;
The nightingale was mute,
And every shepherd's flute
Was cast in silent scorn away,
While all attended to her sweeter lay.
Ye larks and linnets, now resume your song;
And thou, melodious Philomel,
Again thy plaintive story tell;
For death has stopt that tuneful tongue,
Whose music could alone your warbling notes excel.

In vain I look around
O'er all the well-known ground,
My Lucy's wonted footsteps to descry;
Where oft we used to walk,
Where oft in tender talk
We saw the summer sun go down the sky;
Nor by yon fountain's side,
Nor where its waters glide
Along the valley, can she now be found:
In all the wide-stretch'd prospect's ample bound
No more my mournful eye
Can aught of her espy,
But the sad sacred earth where her dear relics lie.

O shades of Hagley, where is now your boast?
Your bright inhabitant is lost.
You she preferr'd to all the gay resorts
Where female vanity might wish to shine,
The pomp of cities, and the pride of courts.
Her modest beauty shunn'd the public eye:
To your sequester'd dales
And flower-embroider'd vales
From an admiring world she chose to fly:
With Nature there retired, and Nature's God,
The silent paths of wisdom trod,
And banish'd every passion from her breast,
But those, the gentlest and the best,
Whose holy flames with energy divine

The virtuous heart enliven and improve,
The conjugal and the maternal love.

Sweet babes, who, like the little playful fawns,
Were wont to trip along these verdant lawns
By your delighted mother's side,
Who now your infant steps shall guide?
Ah! where is now the hand whose tender care
To every virtue would have form'd your youth,
And strew'd with flowers the thorny ways of truth?
O loss beyond repair!
O wretched father! left alone,
To weep their dire misfortune, and thy own!
How shall thy weaken'd mind, oppress'd with woe,
And drooping o'er thy Lucy's grave,
Perform the duties that you doubly owe!
Now she, alas! is gone,
From folly and from vice their helpless age to save?

Thou, plaintive Muse, whom o'er his Laura's urn
Unhappy Petrarch call'd to mourn;
O come, and to this fairer Laura pay
A more impassion'd tear, a more pathetic lay.

Tell how each beauty of her mind and face
Was brighten'd by some sweet peculiar grace!
How eloquent in every look
Through her expressive eyes her soul distinctly spoke!
Tell how her manners, by the world refined,
Left all the taint of modish vice behind,
And made each charm of polish'd courts agree
With candid Truth's simplicity,
And uncorrupted innocence!
Tell how to more than manly sense
She join'd the softening influence
Of more than female tenderness:
How, in the thoughtless days of wealth and joy,
Which oft the care of others' good destroy,
Her kindly-melting heart,
To every want and every woe,
To guilt itself when in distress,
The balm of pity would impart,
And all relief that bounty could bestow!
Ev'n for the kid or lamb that pour'd its life
Beneath the bloody knife,
Her gentle tears would fall,
Tears from sweet Virtue's source, benevolent to all.

Was born in London, on the 25th of January, 1710. After receiving a private education, he was sent to the Temple, with the view of making law his profession; but having been inveigled into a bond of security for Mr. Fleetwood, of Drury Lane Theatre, he was, on the failure of that gentleman, subjected to the penalty of three thousand pounds, which not being able to pay, he was confined for several years in the Fleet prison. On obtaining his release, however, he was enabled to pass the rest of his life in affluence, in consequence of a considerable fortune which he inherited from his deceased wife. He died on the 30th of December, 1774.

Whitehead's chief poems are, Manners, a Satire; The State Dunces; Honour; The Gymnasiad, a mock-heroic poem; and an Epistle to Dr. Thomson. As he never could be prevailed upon to publish a collected edition of his poems during his life-time, the task was performed after his death by his friends and relatives. He was a keen political writer, and he confined himself chiefly to the party contests of the day, so that his poems do not now possess that interest which their intrinsic merits demand, or which they would have undoubtedly obtained if they had been devoted to more general subjects.

WORTHLESSNESS OF EXTERNALS.

Who would the courtly chapel holy call,
Though the whole bench should consecrate the wall?
While the trim chaplain, conscious of a see,
Cries out, "My king, I have no God but thee;"
Lifts to the royal seat the asking eye,
And pays to George the tribute of the sky;
Proves sin alone from humble roofs must spring,
Nor can one earthly failing stain a king.
Bishops and kings may consecrate, 'tis true;
Manners alone claim homage as their due.
Without, the court and church are both profane,
Whatever prelate preach, or monarch reign;
Religion's rostrum virtue's scaffold grows,
And crowns and mitres are mere raree-shows.
In vain, behold yon rev'rend turrets rise,
And Sarum's sacred spire salute the skies!
If the lawn'd Levite's earthly vote be sold,
And God's free gift retail'd for Mammon gold;
No rev'rence can the proud cathedral claim,
But Henley's shop, and Sherlock's, are the same.
Whence have St. Stephen's walls so hallow'd been?
Whence? From the virtue of his sons within.
But should some guileful serpent, void of grace,
Glide in its bounds, and poison all the place;
Should e'er the sacred voice be set to sale,
And o'er the heart the golden fruit prevail;

The place is alter'd, Sir; nor think it strange
To see the senate sink into a 'change.
Or court, or church, or senate-house, or hall,
Manners alone beam dignity on all.
Without their influence, palaces are cells;
Crane-court, a magazine of cockle-shells;
The solemn bench no bosom strikes with awe,
But Westminster 's a warehouse of the law.
These honest truths, my lord, deny you can;
Since all allow, that "Manners make the man."
Hence only glories to the great belong,
Or peers must mingle with the peasant throng.
Though strung with ribbons, yet behold His Grace
Shines but a lacquey in a higher place!
Strip the gay livery from the courtier's back,
What marks the diff'rence 'twixt my lord and Jack?
The same mean, supple, mercenary knave,
The tool of power, and of state the slave:
Alike the vassal heart in each prevails,
And all his lordship boasts is larger vails.
Wealth, manors, titles, may descend, 'tis true;
But every heir must merit's claim renew.

From Manners.

PURSUIT OF HONOUR.

Honour 's a mistress all mankind pursue;
Yet most mistake the false one for the true:
Lured by the trappings, dazzled by the paint,
We worship oft the idol for the saint.
Courted by all, by few the fair is won;
Those lose who seek her, and those gain who shun:
Naked she flies to merit in distress,
And leaves to courts the garnish of her dress.

The million'd merchant seeks her in his gold;
In schools the pedant, and in camps the bold:
The courtier views her, with admiring eyes,
Flutter in ribbons, or in titles rise:
Sir Epicene enjoys her in his plume;
Mead, in the learned wainscot of a room:
By various ways all woo the modest maid;
Yet lose the substance, grasping at the shade.

From Honour.

THIS lover of rural life was born at the Leasowes, in Hales-Owen, Shropshire, in the year 1714, and was distinguished even in childhood by his love of reading and thirst for knowledge. He was first taught to read by an old village dame, whom he has immortalized in his poem of the School-mistress; and, after passing through several private academies, he was sent, in 1732, to Pembroke College, where he continued his studies for ten years. Here he published his principal poems at intervals, which consist of Elegies, Odes, Ballads, the Judgment of Hercules, and several miscellaneous pieces, humorous and moral. In private life, Shenstone was chiefly distinguished by his enthusiastic love for the picturesque improvement of his patrimonial estate, to which he devoted all his time, talents, and capital, so that the Leasowes became, under his care, a perfect fairy-land. He died on the 11th of February, 1763.

ANCIENT BRITONS.

And see Plinlimmon! ev'n the youthful sight
  Scales the proud hill's ethereal cliffs with pain!
Such Caer-caradoc! thy stupendous height,
  Whose ample shade obscures th' Iernian main.

Bleak, joyless regions! where, by science fired,
  Some prying sage his lonely step may bend;
There, by the love of novel plants inspired,
  Invidious view the clambering goats ascend.

Yet for those mountains, clad with lasting snow,
  The freeborn Briton left his greenest mead,
Receding sullen from his mightier foe,
  For here he saw fair Liberty recede.

Then if a chief perform'd a patriot's part,
  Sustain'd her drooping sons, repell'd her foes,
Above all Persian luxe, or Attic art,
  The rude majestic monument arose.

Progressive ages caroll'd forth his fame;
  Sires, to his praise, attuned their children's tongue;
The hoary Druid fed the generous flame,
  While in such strains the reverend wizard sung:—

"Go forth, my sons!—for what is vital breath,
  Your gods expell'd, your liberty resign'd?
Go forth, my sons! for what is instant death
  To souls secure perennial joys to find?

For scenes there are, unknown to war or pain,
Where drops the balm that heals a tyrant's wound;
Where patriots, blest with boundless freedom, reign,
With misletoe's mysterious garlands crown'd.

Such are the names that grace your mystic songs;
Your solemn woods resound their martial fire;
To you, my sons, the ritual meed belongs,
If in the cause you vanquish or expire.

Hark! from the sacred oak that crowns the groves,
What awful voice my raptured bosom warms;
This is the favour'd moment heaven approves;
Sound the shrill trump; this instant, sound to arms."

Theirs was the science of a martial race,
To shape the lance, or decorate the shield;
Ev'n the fair virgin stain'd her native grace,
To give new horrors to the tented field.

Now, for some cheek where guilty blushes glow,
For some false Florimel's impure disguise,
The listed youth, nor war's loud signal know,
Nor virtue's call, nor fame's imperial prize.

Then if soft concord lull'd their fears to sleep,
Inert and silent slept the manly car;
But rush'd horrific o'er the fearful steep,
If freedom's awful clarion breathed to war.

Now the sleek courtier, indolent, and vain,
Throned in the splendid carriage glides supine;
To taint his virtue with a foreign stain,
Or at a favourite's board his faith resign.

Leave then, O Luxury! this happy soil!
Chase her, Britannia, to some hostile shore;
Or fleece the baneful pest with annual spoil,
And let thy virtuous offspring weep no more!

From Elegy XXI.

TO MR. DODSLEY.

Come then, my friend, thy sylvan taste display,
Come, hear thy Faunus tune his rustic lay;
Ah, rather come, and in these dells disown
The care of other strains, and tune thine own.

THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH; A BALLAD:

ALLUDING TO A STORY RECORDED OF HER, WHEN SHE WAS PRISONER AT WOODSTOCK, 1554.

Will you hear how once repining
Great Eliza captive lay?
Each ambitious thought resigning,
Foe to riches, pomp, and sway.

While the nymphs and swains delighted
Tript around in all their pride;
Envying joys by others slighted,
Thus the royal maiden cried:—

"Bred on plains, or born in valleys,
Who would bid those scenes adieu?
Stranger to the arts of malice,
Who would ever courts pursue?

Malice never taught to treasure,
Censure never taught to bear:
Love is all the shepherd's pleasure;
Love is all the damsel's care.

How can they of humble station
Vainly blame the powers above?
Or accuse the dispensation
Which allows them all to love?

Love like air is widely given;
Power nor chance can these restrain;
Truest, noblest gifts of heaven!
Only purest on the plain!

Peers can no such charms discover,
All in stars and garters drest,
As, on Sundays, does the lover,
With his nosegay on his breast.

Pinks and roses in profusion,
Said to fade when Chloe's near;
Fops may use the same allusion,
But the shepherd is sincere.

Hark to yonder milk-maid singing
Cheerly o'er the brimming pail;
Cowslips all around her springing
Sweetly paint the golden vale.

Never yet did courtly maiden
Move so sprightly, look so fair;
Never breast with jewels laden
Pour a song so void of care.

Would indulgent Heaven had granted
Me some rural damsel's part!
All the empire I had wanted
Then had been my shepherd's heart.

Then, with him, o'er hills and mountains,
Free from fetters, might I rove:
Fearless taste the crystal fountains;
Peaceful sleep beneath the grove.

Rustics had been more forgiving;
Partial to my virgin bloom:
None had envied me when living;
None had triumph'd o'er my tomb."

ANACREONTIC.

'Twas in a cool Aonian glade,
The wanton Cupid, spent with toil,
Had sought refreshment from the shade,
And stretch'd him on the mossy soil.

A vagrant Muse drew nigh, and found
The subtle traitor fast asleep;
And is it thine to snore profound,
She said, yet leave the world to weep?

But hush—from this auspicious hour,
The world, I ween, may rest in peace;
And, robb'd of darts, and stript of power,
Thy peevish petulance decrease.

Sleep on, poor child, whilst I withdraw,
And this thy vile artillery hide—
When the Castalian fount she saw,
And plunged his arrows in the tide.

That magic fount—ill-judging maid!
Shall cause you soon to curse the day
You dared the shafts of love invade,
And gave his arms redoubled sway.

For in a stream so wondrous clear,
When angry Cupid searches round,
Will not the radiant points appear?
Will not the furtive spoils be found?

Too soon they were; and every dart,
Dipp'd in the muse's mystic spring,
Acquired new force to wound the heart,
And taught at once to love and sing.

Then farewell, ye Pierian quire;
For who will now your altars throng?
From love we learn to swell the lyre;
And Echo asks no sweeter song.

DESCRIPTION OF VIRTUE.

This, whose attire less clogg'd with art appear'd,
The simple sweets of innocence endear'd.
Her sprightly bloom, her quick sagacious eye,
Show'd native merit, mix'd with modesty.
Her air diffused a mild yet awful ray,
Severely sweet, and innocently gay.
Such the chaste image of the martial maid,
In artless folds of virgin white array'd!
She let no borrow'd rose her cheeks adorn,
Her blushing cheeks, that shamed the purple morn
Her charms nor had nor wanted artful foils,
Or studied gestures, or well-practised smiles.
She scorn'd the toys which render beauty less:
She proved th' engaging chastity of dress;
And while she chose in native charms to shine,
Ev'n thus she seem'd, nay, more than seem'd, divine.
One modest emerald clasp'd the robe she wore,
And, in her hand, th' imperial sword she bore.
Sublime her height, majestic was her pace,
And match'd the awful honours of her face.
The shrubs, the flowers, that deck'd the verdant ground,
Seem'd, where she trod, with rising lustre crown'd.
Still her approach with stronger influence warm'd;
She pleased, while distant; but, when near, she charm'd.
So strikes the gazer's eye, the silver gleam,
That glittering quivers o'er a distant stream:
But from its banks we see new beauties rise,
And, in its crystal bosom, trace the skies.

From The Judgment of Hercules.

No man, perhaps, was ever so fortunate in being distinctly and minutely perpetuated to posterity as this literary Colossus. From the recorded reminiscences of his admiring friends, and, above all, the copious narrative of Boswell, we have the giant as distinctly before us as if he stood there in flesh and blood. Besides knowing completely the character of his mind, and his habits of thought, we hear the rough tones of his voice swelling in debate with the consciousness of approaching triumph, or sinking into huskiness with ill-suppressed anger or contempt—we see the working of his features upon his scarred and massive countenance, and the shaking of his head, as he becomes more and more excited—we can even tell every curl of his wig, and every button upon his coat: and such will it be with the generations that live a century hence. Samuel Johnson will never be talked of in the past tense, as a person who has been. He will be the living companion of every age. On this account, the writing of his life, as well as a criticism upon his works, would be a superfluous attempt; and we shall content ourselves with a few chronological statements, to refresh the memory of the reader.

This singularly fortunate personage was born at Litchfield, in Staffordshire, on the 7th of September, 1709. Being afflicted in infancy with scrofula, or king's-evil, he was carried by his mother to Queen Anne for a cure; but the royal touch, like other fairy attributes, had now lost its power. At school, Johnson is decribed as having been indolent and careless: but who can augur of the state of a mind like his from external repose, or indifference to the pursuits of his class-fellows? He was entered a Commoner of Pembroke College, Oxford, in 1728; and even already he was distinguished by the extent of his reading, and the correctness and elegance of his Latin compositions. He had repaired to the University under hopes of pecuniary support that were never realized, and thus his literary course was beset by extreme poverty and privation; and the bitterness of spirit which this state produced, expressed itself in gay sallies which made the hearers laugh, without their knowing that such mirthful language often expresses a sorrow too deep for complaint. He was generally to be found sauntering about the College quadrangles, attended by a group of merry students, who preferred his bon-mots to the prelections of their tutors. Such, too, was his pride and independence of spirit, that, one morning, on finding a pair of shoes which some kind friend had left at his door, his old ones being worn out, Johnson indignantly threw them away, resolving rather to walk bare-foot, than receive what looked (as he thought) like an alms. This trivial circumstance also shows the straits to which he must have been reduced, while making those acquirements that were to render his name immortal. After leaving College, his narrow circumstances obliged him to accept the situation of an usher, from which he was glad to escape, and hang loose for some time upon the world, until he married, and then attempted to establish a boarding-school. The plan failed, upon which he repaired to London, and there contrived for some time to exist by his contributions to the Gentleman's Magazine. In 1738, he published his London, and this poem was the commencement of his fame and success; but they still came so slowly, that he was obliged to exert the utmost activity of his pen, and expend his intellectual strength upon the passing politics of the day. Such continued to be the case until 1747, when he planned his celebrated Dictionary, and contracted with the publishers for its completion. His circumstances from this period were less precarious, although still far from being easy, until 1762, when he received the grant of a pension from the king, of 300*l.* per annum, in consequence of the excellence of his writings, and the benefit which their moral tendency had been of to these kingdoms. He had now obtained a competence, and in the most honourable manner; but as his heart was ample, and his mind fertile, he enlarged his sphere of benevolence, and increased his labours to fill it. He was now seated upon the literary throne without a rival, and surrounded by a host of friends who regarded him with love and veneration; and thus he continued till the period of his death, which was on the 13th of December, 1784.



JOHNSON.

TO MISS *****.

DISTINGUISHED FOR MUSIC AND FLOWER-PAINTING.

When Stella strikes the tuneful string
In scenes of imitated spring,
Where beauty lavishes her powers
On beds of never-fading flowers,
And pleasure propagates around
Each charm of modulated sound;
Ah! think not in the dangerous hour,
The nymph fictitious as the flower,
But shun, rash youth, the gay alcove,
Nor tempt the snares of wily love.
When charms thus press on every sense,
What thought of flight, or of defence?
Deceitful hope, and vain desire,
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H. Corbould. W. F. Wells

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For ever flutter o'er her lyre,

Delighting as the youth draws nigh,
To point the glances of her eye,
And forming with unerring art
New chains to hold the captive heart.
But on those regions of delight
Might truth intrude with daring flight;
Could Stella, sprightly, fair, and young,
One moment hear the moral song;
Instruction with her flowers might spring,
And wisdom warble from her string.
Mark when from thousand mingled dyes
Thou seest one pleasing form arise,
How active light, and thoughtful shade,
In greater scenes each other aid.
Mark when the different notes agree
In friendly contrariety;
How passion's well-accorded strife
Gives all the harmony of life;
Thy pictures shall thy conduct frame,
Consistent still, though not the same;
Thy music teach the nobler art,
To tune the regulated heart.

PROLOGUE SPOKEN BY MR. GARRICK, AT THE OPENING OF THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

When Learning's triumph o'er her barbarous foes
First rear'd the stage, immortal Shakspeare rose;
Each change of many-colour'd life he drew,
Exhausted worlds, and then imagined new:
Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,
And panting Time toil'd after him in vain.
His powerful strokes presiding truth impress'd,
And unresisted passion storm'd the breast.

Then Jonson came, instructed from the school,
To please in method, and invent by rule;
His studious patience and laborious art,
By regular approach essay'd the heart:
Cold approbation gave the lingering bays;
For those who durst not censure, scarce could praise.
A mortal born, he met the general doom,
But left, like Egypt's kings, a lasting tomb.

The wits of Charles found easier ways to fame,
Nor wish'd for Jonson's art, nor Shakspeare's flame.

*

Themselves they studied; as they felt, they writ:
Intrigue was plot, obscenity was wit.
Vice always found a sympathetic friend;
They pleased their age, and did not aim to mend.
Yet bards like these aspired to lasting praise,
And proudly hoped to pimp in future days.
Their cause was general, their supports were strong;
Their slaves were willing, and their reign was long:
Till shame regain'd the post that sense betray'd,
And virtue call'd oblivion to her aid.

Then, crush'd by rules, and weaken'd as refined,
For years the power of tragedy declined;
From bard to bard the frigid caution crept,
Till declamation roar'd whilst passion slept;
Yet still did virtue deign the stage to tread,
Philosophy remain'd though nature fled.
But forced, at length, her ancient reign to quit,
She saw great Faustus lay the ghost of wit;
Exulting folly hail'd the joyous day,
And pantomime and song confirm'd her sway.

But who the coming changes can presage,
And mark the future periods of the stage?
Perhaps, if skill could distant times explore,
New Behns, new Durfeys, yet remain in store;
Perhaps, where Lear has raved, and Hamlet died,
On flying cars new sorcerers may ride;
Perhaps (for who can guess th' effects of chance?)
Here Hunt may box, or Mahomet may dance.

Hard is his lot that here by fortune placed,
Must watch the wild vicissitudes of taste;
With every meteor of caprice must play,
And chase the new-blown bubbles of the day.
Ah! let not censure term our fate our choice,
The stage but echoes back the public voice;
The drama's laws, the drama's patrons give,
For we that live to please, must please to live.

Then prompt no more the follies you decry,
As tyrants doom their tools of guilt to die;
'Tis yours, this night, to bid the reign commence
Of rescued nature, and reviving sense;
To chase the charms of sound, the pomp of show,
For useful mirth and salutary woe;
Bid scenic virtue form the rising age,
And truth diffuse her radiance from the stage.

FATE OF POVERTY IN LONDON.

By numbers here from shame or censure free,
All crimes are safe but hated poverty.
This, only this, the rigid law pursues,
This, only this, provokes the snarling muse.
The sober trader at a tatter'd cloak
Wakes from his dream, and labours for a joke;
With brisker air the silken courtiers gaze,
And turn the varied taunt a thousand ways.
Of all the griefs that harass the distress'd,
Sure the most bitter is a scornful jest;
Fate never wounds more deep the generous heart,
Than when a blockhead's insult points the dart.
Has Heaven reserved, in pity to the poor,
No pathless waste, or undiscover'd shore?
No secret island in the boundless main?
No peaceful desert yet unclaim'd by Spain?
Quick let us rise, the happy seats explore,
And bear oppression's insolence no more.
This mournful truth is every where confess'd,
SLOW RISES WORTH BY POVERTY DEPRESS'D:
But here more slow, where all are slaves to gold,
Where looks are merchandise, and smiles are sold:
Where won by bribes, by flatteries implored,
The groom retails the favours of his lord.

From London.

FALSE GLORY.

The festal blazes, the triumphal show,
The ravish'd standard, and the captive foe,
The senate's thanks, the gazette's pompous tale,
With force resistless o'er the brave prevail.
Such bribes the rapid Greek o'er Asia whirl'd,
For such the steady Romans shook the world;
For such in distant lands the Britons shine,
And stain with blood the Danube or the Rhine;
This power has praise, that virtue scarce can warm,
Till fame supplies the universal charm.
Yet Reason frowns on War's unequal game,
Where wasted nations raise a single name,
And mortgaged states their grandsires' wreaths regret,
From age to age in everlasting debt;

Wreaths which at last the dear-bought right convey,
To rust on medals, or on stones decay.
On what foundation stands the warrior's pride?
How just his hopes, let Swedish Charles decide:
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labours tire;
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquer'd lord of pleasure and of pain;
No joys to him pacific sceptres yield,
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field;
Behold surrounding kings their power combine,
And one capitulate, and one resign;
Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;
"Think nothing gain'd (he cries), till nought remain;
On Moscow's walls till Gothic standards fly,
And all be mine beneath the polar sky."
The march begins in military state,
And nations on his eye suspended wait;
Stern Famine guards the solitary coast,
And Winter barricades the realms of Frost;
He comes, nor want nor cold his course delay;—
Hide, blushing Glory! hide Pultowa's day:
The vanquish'd hero leaves his broken bands,
And shows his miseries in distant lands;
Condemn'd a needy supplicant to wait,
While ladies interpose, and slaves debate.
But did not Chance at length her error mend?
Did no subverted empire mark his end?
Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound?
Or hostile millions press him to the ground?
His fall was destined to a barren strand,
A petty fortress, and a dubious hand;
He left the name, at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.

From The Vanity of Human Wishes.

IMITATION OF THE STYLE OF ****.

Hermit hoar, in solemn cell
Wearing out life's evening grey;
Strike thy bosom, sage, and tell,
What is bliss, and which the way.

This I spoke, and speaking sigh'd,
Scarce repress'd the starting tear—
When the hoary sage replied,
Come, my lad, and drink some beer.

This poet, who was absurdly cried up as a second Homer by his contemporaries, and who is now as much neglected as he was formerly honoured, was born in London, in 1712. He began to write verses at an early age; and when only sixteen, he produced a poem to the memory of Sir Isaac Newton. After having left school, Glover commenced life as a Hamburgh merchant, in which he was successful, but he still retained his literary tastes and habits amidst the avocations of traffic. In 1737, he published his Epic poem of Leonidas, in nine, which were subsequently expanded into twelve books, and the astonishing favour with which it was received, may be explained from several circumstances. It was something new for a wealthy magnifico to be a poet: he had engaged with ardour in the support of the ministry against the court, and he was therefore backed in return by all the weight and talent of a powerful party; and Leonidas appeared at a period when every idea or theme subversive of despotism, and favourable to liberty, was gladly laid hold of. But when the times changed, the poem disappeared; and scarcely a recollection now remains of a work that was once so celebrated. Besides Leonidas, Glover was the author of the Tragedy of Boadicea, for which his popularity ensured a favourable reception in performance, and it was acted nine nights at Drury Lane. Afterwards he produced Medea, a play chiefly adapted from Euripides and Seneca, and with the ancient chorus. After a long life of honourable activity and public usefulness, during which he was esteemed by all parties he died on the 25th of November, 1785.

THE CHARIOT OF XERXES.

The king arose:—No more. Prepare my car.
The Spartan exile, Demaratus, call.
We will ourselves advance to view the foe.
The monarch will'd; and suddenly he heard
His trampling horses. High on silver wheels
The ivory car with azure sapphires shone,
Cærulean beryls, and the jasper green,
The emerald, the ruby's glowing blush,
The flaming topaz with its golden beam,
The pearl, th' empurpled amethyst, and all
The various gems, which India's mines afford
To deck the pomp of kings. In burnish'd gold
A sculptured eagle from behind display'd
His stately neck, and o'er the royal head
Outstretch'd his dazzling wings. Eight generous steeds,
Which on the famed Nisæan plain were nursed
In wintry Media, drew the radiant car.
Not those of old, to Hercules refused
By false Laomedon, nor they which bore
The son of Thetis through the scatter'd rear
Of Troy's devoted race, with these might vie
In strength or beauty. In obedient pride
They hear their lord. Exulting, in the air

They toss their foreheads. On their glistening chests
The silver manes disport. The king ascends.
Beside his footstool Demaratus sits.
The charioteer now shakes th' effulgent reins,
Strong Patiramphes. At the signal, bound
Th' attentive steeds; the chariot flies: behind,
Ten thousand horse in thunder sweep the field.

From Leonidas: Book IV.

CONTRAST BETWEEN THE PERSIAN AND GRECIAN SOLDIERS.

Contemptuous smiled the monarch, and resumed:—
Wilt thou, in Lacedemon once supreme,
Encounter twenty Persians? Yet these Greeks
In greater disproportion must engage
Our host to-morrow. Demaratus then:—
By single combat were the trial vain
To show the power of well-united force,
Which oft by military skill surmounts
The weight of numbers. Prince, the difference learn
Between thy warriors, and the sons of Greece.
The flower, the safeguard of thy numerous camp
Are mercenaries. These are canton'd round
Thy provinces. No fertile field demands
Their painful hand to break the fallow glebe.
Them to the noon-day toil no harvest calls;
Nor on the mountain falls the stubborn oak
By their laborious axe. Their watchful eyes
Observe not, how the flocks and heifers feed.
To them of wealth, of all possessions void,
The name of country with an empty sound
Flies o'er the ear, nor warms their joyless hearts,
Who share no country. Needy, yet in scorn
Rejecting labour, wretched by their wants,
Yet profligate through indolence, with limbs
Enervated and soft, with minds corrupt,
From misery, debauchery, and sloth,
Are these to battle drawn against a foe,
Train'd in gymnastic exercise and arms,
Inured to hardship, and the child of toil,
Wont through the freezing shower, the wintry storm,
O'er his own glebe the tardy ox to goad,
Or in the sun's impetuous heat to glow
Beneath the burden of his yellow sheaves;
Whence on himself, on her whose faithful arms

Enfold him joyful, on a growing race
Which glad his dwelling, plenty he bestows
With independence. When to battle call'd,
For them his dearest comfort, and his care;
And for the harvest, promised to his toil,
He lifts the shield, nor shuns unequal force.
Such are the troops of every state in Greece.
One only yields a breed more warlike still,
Of whom selected bands appear in sight,
All citizens of Sparta. They the glebe
Have never turn'd, nor bound the golden sheaf.
They are devoted to severer tasks,
For war alone, their sole delight and care.
From infancy to manhood they are train'd
To winter watches, to inclement skies,
To plunge through torrents, brave the tusky boar,
To arms and wounds; a discipline of pain
So fierce, so constant, that to them a camp
With all its hardships is a seat of rest,
And war itself remission from their toil.

From Leonidas: Book IV.

THE VISION OF ARTEMISIA.

Now slowly towards the Persian camp her steps
In silence she directed; when a voice,
Sent from a rock, accessible which seem'd
To none, but feather'd passengers of air,
By this reproof detain'd her:—Caria's queen
Art thou, to Greece by Doric blood allied?
Com'st thou to lay her fruitful meadows waste,
Thou homager of tyrants? Upward gazed
Th' astonish'd princess. Lo! a female shape,
Tall and majestic, from th' impendent ridge
Look'd awful down. A holy fillet bound
Her graceful hair, loose flowing. Seldom wept
Great Artemisia. Now a springing tear
Between her eyelids gleam'd. Too true, she sigh'd,
A homager of tyrants! Voice austere,
And presence half divine! Again the voice:—
O Artemisia, hide thy Doric sword.
Let no barbarian tyrant through thy might,
Thy counsels, valiant as thou art and wise,
Consume the holy fanes, deface the tombs,
Subvert the laws of Greece, her sons enthral.

The queen made no reply. Her breast-plate heaved.
The tremulous attire of covering mail
Confess'd her struggle. She at length exclaim'd:—
Olympian thund'rer, from thy neighb'ring hill
Of sacred oaths remind me! Then aside
She turns to shun that majesty of form,
In solemn sounds upbraiding. Torn her thoughts
She feels. A painful conflict she endures
With recollection of her Doric race;
Till gratitude, reviving, arms her breast.
Her royal benefactor she recalls,
Back to his sight precipitates her steps.

From Leonidas: Book IV.

DESCRIPTION OF TERIBAZUS.

Amid the van of Persia was a youth
Named Teribazus, not for golden stores,
Not for wide pastures, traversed o'er by herds,
By fleece-abounding sheep, or generous steeds,
Nor yet for power, nor splendid honours, famed.
Rich was his mind in every art divine;
Through every path of science had he walk'd,
The votary of wisdom. In the years
When tender down invests the ruddy cheek,
He with the Magi turn'd the hallow'd page
Of Zoroastres. Then his tow'ring thoughts
High on the plumes of contemplation soar'd.
He from the lofty Babylonian fane
With learn'd Chaldæans traced the heav'nly sphere,
There number'd o'er the vivid fires, which gleam
On night's bespangled bosom. Nor unheard
Were Indian sages from sequester'd bowers,
While on the banks of Ganges they disclosed
The powers of nature, whether in the woods,
The fruitful glebe, or flower, the healing plant,
The limpid waters, or the ambient air,
Or in the purer element of fire.
The realm of old Sesostris next he view'd,
Mysterious Egypt, with her hidden rites
Of Isis and Osiris. Last he sought
Th' Ionian Greeks, from Athens sprung, nor pass'd
Miletis by, which once in rapture heard
The tongue of Thales, nor Priene's walls,
Where wisdom dwelt with Bias, nor the seat
Of Pittacus, revered on Lesbian shores.

From Leonidas: Book VIII.

This poet was born at Cambridge in February, 1714, and was educated at Winchester College, and afterwards at Clare Hall. He was devoted from an early period to versification, in which he took Pope for his model. His first attempt in authorship consisted of a poem on the marriage of the Prince of Wales, a production not above mediocrity; but his subsequent productions were of a superior character, and were received favourably by the public. He also attempted dramatic writing, and produced The Roman Father, which was acted at Drury Lane in 1750; and Creusa, which was exhibited upon the stage in 1754. In 1757, Whitehead was appointed Laureate, in consequence of the death of Colley Cibber. His own death occurred in 1785.

THE YOUTH AND THE PHILOSOPHER: A Fable.

A Grecian youth, of talents rare,
Whom Plato's philosophic care
Had form'd for virtue's nobler view,
By precept and example too,
Would often boast his matchless skill,
To curb the steed, and guide the wheel,
And as he pass'd the gazing throng,
With graceful ease, and smack'd the thong,
The idiot wonder they express'd
Was praise and transport to his breast.
At length, quite vain, he needs would show
His master what his art could do;
And bade his slaves the chariot lead
To Academus' sacred shade.
The trembling grove confess'd its fright,
The wood-nymphs startled at the sight,
The muses drop the learned lyre,
And to their inmost shades retire!
Howe'er, the youth with forward air
Bows to the sage, and mounts the car.
The lash resounds, the courser's spring,
The chariot marks the rolling ring,
And gath'ring crowds, with eager eyes,
And shouts, pursue him as he flies.
Triumphant to the goal return'd,
With nobler thirst his bosom burn'd;
And now along th' indented plain,
The self-same track he marks again;
Pursues with care the nice design,
Nor ever deviates from the line.
Amazement seized the circling crowd;
The youths with emulation glow'd,

Ev'n bearded sages hail'd the boy,
And all, but Plato, gazed with joy.
For he, deep-judging sage, beheld
With pain the triumphs of the field;
And when the charioteer drew nigh,
And, flush'd with hope, had caught his eye:
Alas! unhappy youth, he cried,
Expect no praise from me (and sigh'd);
With indignation I survey
Such skill and judgment thrown away.
The time profusely squander'd there
On vulgar arts beneath thy care,
If well employ'd, at less expense,
Had taught thee honour, virtue, sense,
And raised thee from a coachman's fate,
To govern men, and guide the state.

ON NOBILITY.

Poets, my lord, by some unlucky fate
Condemn'd to flatter the too-easy great,
Have oft, regardless of their heaven-born flame,
Enshrined a title, and adored a name;
For idol deities forsook the true,
And paid to greatness what was virtue's due.
Yet hear, at least, one recreant bard maintain
Their incense fruitless, and your honours vain:
Teach you to scorn th' auxiliar props, that raise
The painted produce of these sunshine days;
Proud from yourself, like India's worm, to weave
Th' ennobling thread which fortune cannot give.
In two short precepts your whole lesson lies;
Would you be great?—be virtuous, and be wise.
In elder time, ere heralds yet were known
To gild the vain with glories not their own;
Or infant language saw such terms prevail,
As fess and chev'ron, pale and contrepale;
'Twas he alone the shaggy spoils might wear,
Whose strength subdued the lion or the bear;
For him the rosy spring with smiles beheld
Her honours stript from every grove and field;
For him the rustic quires with songs advance;
For him the virgins form the annual dance.
Born to protect, like gods they hail the brave;
And sure 'twas godlike, to be born to save!

Was born October 1, 1715. In 1732, he was entered as a servitor of University College, Oxford—his father, who was Rector of Beaudesert, being too poor to enter him as a commoner. In 1737, Jago took orders, and obtained two small livings, after which he was appointed vicar of Snitterfield, where he spent the rest of his life. He died in 1781. The best of his poetical productions is Edge-Hill, of which it is high praise to say, that it has been often thought equal to the Grongar Hill of Dyer.

KENILWORTH CASTLE.

Here let us pause a while,
To read the melancholy tale of pomp
Laid low in dust, and from historic page,
Compose its epitaph. Hail, Clinton! hail!
Thy Norman founder still yon neighb'ring green,
And massy walls, with style imperial graced,
Record. The Montforts thee with hardy deeds,
And memorable siege by Henry's arms,
And senatorial acts, that bear thy name,
Distinguish. Thee the bold Lancastrian line,
A royal train! from valiant Gaunt derived,
Grace with new lustre; till Eliza's hand
Transferr'd thy walls to Leicester's favour'd earl.
He long, beneath thy roof, the maiden queen,
And all her courtly guests, with rare device
Of mask, and emblematic scenery,
Tritons, and sea-nymphs, and the floating isle,
Detain'd. Nor feats of prowess, joust, or tilt
Of harness'd knights, nor rustic revelry,
Were wanting; nor the dance and sprightly mirth
Beneath the festive walls, with regal state,
And choicest luxury served. But regal state
And sprightly mirth, beneath the festive roof,
Are now no more. No more assembled crowds
At the stern porter's lodge admittance crave.
No more, with plaint, or suit importunate,
The thronged lobby echoes, nor with staff
Or gaudy badge, the busy pursuivants
Lead to wish'd audience. All, alas! is gone,
And Silence keeps her melancholy court
Throughout the walls; save where, in rooms of state,
Kings once reposed! chatter the wrangling daws,
Or screech-owls hoot along the vaulted isles.
No more the trumpet calls the martial band,
With sprightly summons, to the guarded lists;
Nor lofty galleries their pride disclose
Of beauteous nymphs in courtly pomp attired,

Watching, with trembling hearts, the doubtful strife,
And with their looks inspiring wondrous deeds.
No more the lake displays its pageant shows,
And emblematic forms. Alike the lake,
And all its emblematic forms, are flown,
And in their place mute flocks and heifers graze,
Or buxom damsels ted the new-mown hay.
What art thou, Grandeur! with thy flattering train
Of pompous lies, and boastful promises?
Where are they now, and what's their mighty sum?
All, all are vanish'd! like the fleeting forms
Drawn in an evening cloud. Nought now remains,
Save these sad relics of departed pomp,
These spoils of time, a monumental pile!
Which to the vain its mournful tale relates,
And warns them not to trust to fleeting dreams.

From Edge-Hill: Book II.

TO A LADY.

When Nature joins a beauteous face
With shape, and air, and life, and grace,
To every imperfection blind,
I spy no blemish in the mind.

When wit flows pure from Stella's tongue,
Or animates the sprightly song,
Our hearts confess the power divine,
Nor lightly prize its mortal shrine.

Good-nature will a conquest gain,
Though wit and beauty sigh in vain:
When generous thoughts the breast inspire,
I wish its rank and fortunes higher.

When Sidney's charms again unite
To win the soul, and bless the sight,
Fair, and learn'd, and good, and great!
An earthly goddess is complete.

But when I see a sordid mind
With affluence and ill-nature join'd,
And pride without a grain of sense,
And without beauty insolence,
The creature with contempt I view,
And sure 'tis like Miss —— you know who.

This eminent poet and scholar was born in London, on the 26th of November, 1716. After receiving the first portion of his classical education at Eton, he entered a pensioner at Peter House, Cambridge, where he continued five years; after which he travelled as companion with Horace Walpole, through France and part of Italy. At Florence, however, these ill-assorted friends parted in mutual dislike, and Gray continued his tour alone. Two months after his return to England, his father died in such embarrassed circumstances, that Gray found himself too poor to realize his intention of studying the law as a profession. He, therefore, returned to Cambridge, and continued his studies, and there also he remained during the rest of his life.

Having a mind stored with classical learning, and a rich imagination, Gray naturally cultivated poetry. One of his first attempts was, to embody the history of Agrippina in a tragedy; but, perhaps, he soon found himself unable to attain that flexibility of style which dramatic poetry so essentially requires. At all events, Agrippina was never finished, and the world, perhaps, did not lose much on that account. He soon discovered the department of poetry for which his powers and tastes were best adapted; and in 1742, he produced the Ode to Spring, the Prospect of Eton, and the Ode to Adversity. At this period, also, he was desirous to excel in the composition of Latin poetry, in which Johnson, an incontestable judge, assures us, he would have eminently excelled, as his Latin verses displayed a copiousness of language such as very few possessed.

The slowness of Gray in poetical composition was a perfect contrast to the rapidity of modern poets: but besides being constitutionally apathetic, and averse to active exertion, he had a fastidiousness that would not be satisfied, until his productions had received the utmost degree of polish. Hence the small number of his poems, and the wide intervals at which they appeared. Thus, his Ode on the Death of a Cat was not written till 1747, nor his next and most celebrated poem, the Elegy in a Country Churchyard, until 1750. About the same time, or very soon after, in consequence of an invitation from Lady Cobham, he produced his Long Story—a poem full of graceful wit and humour, and which exhibits him in a wholly different view from his other poems. Such a production, from such a writer, is as unexpected as the celebrated ride of John Gilpin from the austere and gloomy pen of Cowper. In 1757, appeared The Progress of Poetry, and The Bard. The last poem seems to have wonderfully astonished the reading public. They saw and felt that it was a magnificent production; but they could not understand those pictures and allusions, which an ordinary portion of knowledge in English history would have rendered easy and distinct.

In 1768, the Professorship of History at Cambridge becoming vacant, was conferred upon Gray, than whom a person of greater and more extensive scholarship could not have been found at that time in England. But his habitual indolence unfitted him for the office; for although he retained it till his death, he delivered no lectures, but wasted his time in fretful intentions to prepare them. At war with himself, in consequence of this imbecility of purpose, he embittered his peace and enfeebled his constitution, until repentance and exertion were equally unnecessary. He died on the 30th of July, 1771.

Gray's lyrics formed a new era in English poetry. In these, he has blended the grandeur of the Greek and the sweetness of the Italian languages, while the peculiar formation of his Strophe, Antistrophe, and Epode, which add such power and gracefulness to his Odes, had never been before attempted. It may also be mentioned, in praise of these wonderful productions, that, however highly appreciated, their beauties do not strike at first sight, but by successive perusals, and as the taste of society continues to improve. Thus time, which has detracted from the reputation of so many of his contemporaries, has only increased the fame of Gray as a poet. He is better understood and more highly prized in the present day, than he was during his own; and the next generation will probably increase this estimate, and raise him to his proper rank as one of the *greatest* of our English poets.



Lo! where the rosy-bosom'd hours,
Fair Venus' train appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
And wake the purple year!
The Attic warbler pours her throat,
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
The untaught harmony of spring:
While, whispering pleasure as they fly,
Cool zephyrs through the clear blue sky
Their gather'd fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
A broader browner shade;
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'er-canopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think
(At ease reclined in rustic state)
How vain the ardour of the crowd,
How low, how little, are the proud,
How indigent the great!

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GRAY.

ODE ON THE SPRING.

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Fair Venus' train appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
And wake the purple year!
The Attic warbler pours her throat,
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
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Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
A broader browner shade;
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'er-canopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think
(At ease reclined in rustic state)
How vain the ardour of the crowd,
How low, how little, are the proud,
How indigent the great!

Still is the toiling hand of Care:
The panting herds repose:
Yet hark, how through the peopled air
The busy murmur glows!
The insect youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honied spring,
And float amid the liquid noon:
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some show their gaily-gilded trim
Quick-glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye
Such is the race of man:
And they that creep, and they that fly,
Shall end where they began.
Alike the busy and the gay
But flutter through life's little day,
In fortune's varying colours drest:
Brush'd by the hand of rough mischance,
Or chill'd by age, their airy dance
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear in accents low
The sportive kind reply;
Poor moralist! and what art thou?
A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
No painted plumage to display:
On hasty wings thy youth is flown:
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—
We frolic while 'tis May.

THE BARD.—A Pindaric Ode.

[Advertisement. The following Ode is founded on a tradition current in Wales, that Edward the First, when he completed the conquest of that country, ordered all the Bards, that fell into his hands, to be put to death.]

I. 1.

"Ruin seize thee, ruthless king!
Confusion on thy banners wait;
Though, fann'd by Conquest's crimson wing,
They mock the air with idle state.
Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail,
Nor e'en thy virtues, tyrant, shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears!"

*

Such were the sounds, that o'er the crested pride
Of the first Edward scatter'd wild dismay,
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his long array.
Stout Glo'ster stood aghast in speechless trance.
To arms! cried Mortimer, and couch'd his quivering lance

I. 2.

On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the Poet stood,
(Loose his beard, and hoary hair
Stream'd, like a meteor, to the troubled air);
And with a master's hand, and prophet's fire,
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.
"Hark, how each giant-oak, and desert cave,
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!
O'er thee, oh King! their hundred arms they wave,
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe;
Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

I. 3.

"Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hush'd the stormy main;
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed:
Mountains, ye mourn in vain
Mordred, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topp'd head.
On dreary Arvon's shore they lie,
Smear'd with gore, and ghastly pale:
Far, far aloof th' affrighted ravens sail;
The famish'd eagle screams, and passes by.
Dear, lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear, as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear, as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country's cries—
No more I weep. They do not sleep.
On yonder cliffs, a grisly band,
I see them sit, they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land:
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line."

II. 1.

'Weave the warp, and weave the woof,
The winding-sheet of Edward's race;

Give ample room, and verge enough
The characters of hell to trace.
Mark the year, and mark the night,
When Severn shall re-echo with affright;
The shrieks of death, through Berkeley's roofs that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing King!
She-wolf of France, with unrelenting fangs,
That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled mate,
From thee be born, who o'er thy country hangs
The scourge of Heaven! What terrors round him wait!
Amazement in his van, with Flight combined,
And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude behind.

II. 2.

'Mighty Victor, mighty Lord,
Low on his funeral couch he lies!
No pitying heart, no eye, afford
A tear to grace his obsequies.
Is the sable Warrior fled?
Thy son is gone. He rests among the dead.
The swarm, that in thy noon-tide beam were born?
Gone to salute the rising Morn.
Fair laughs the Morn, and soft the Zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes;
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

II. 3.

'Fill high the sparkling bowl,
The rich repast prepare:
Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast;
Close by the regal chair
Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.
Heard ye the din of battle bray,
Lance to lance, and horse to horse?
Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
And through the kindred squadrons mow their way
Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murder fed,
Revere his consort's faith, his father's fame,
And spare the meek usurper's holy head!
Above, below, the rose of snow,
Twined with her blushing foe, we spread:

The bristled Boar in infant gore
Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
Now, brothers, bending o'er th' accursed loom,
Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom

III. 1.

'Edward, lo! to sudden fate
(Weave we the woof. The thread is spun.)
Half of thy heart we consecrate.
(The web is wove. The work is done.')
Stay, oh stay! nor thus forlorn
Leave me unbless'd, unpitied, here to mourn:
In yon bright track, that fires the western skies,
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.
But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height,
Descending slow, their glittering skirts unroll?
Visions of glory, spare my aching sight,
Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!
No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.
All hail, ye genuine kings! Britannia's issue, hail!

III. 2.

"Girt with many a baron bold
Sublime their starry fronts they rear;
And gorgeous dames, and statesmen old,
In bearded majesty, appear.
In the midst a form divine!
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-line;
Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face,
Attemper'd sweet to virgin-grace.
What strings symphonious tremble in the air,
What strains of vocal transport round her play!
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear!
They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
Bright Rapture calls, and soaring, as she sings,
Waves in the eye of Heaven her many-colour'd wings.

III. 3.

"The verse adorn again
Fierce War, and faithful Love,
And Truth severe, by fairy Fiction drest.
In buskin'd measures move
Pale Grief, and pleasing Pain,
With Horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast.
A voice, as of the cherub-choir,
Gales from blooming Eden bear;
And distant warblings lessen on my ear,
That lost in long futurity expire.

Fond, impious man, think'st thou, yon sanguine cloud,
Raised by thy breath, hath quench'd the orb of day?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
Enough for me: with joy I see
The different doom our fates assign.
Be thine Despair, and sceptred Care;
To triumph, and to die, are mine."
He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endless night.

GRAY OF HIMSELF.

Too poor for a bribe, and too proud to impórtune;
He had not the method of making a fortune;
Could love and could hate, so was thought somewhat odd;
No very great wit, he believed in a God.
A post or a pension he did not desire,
But left church and state to Charles Townshend and Squire.

EPITAPH, AT BECKENHAM, ON MRS. CLARKE.

Lo! where this silent marble weeps,
A friend, a wife, a mother, sleeps;
A heart, within whose sacred cell
The peaceful virtues loved to dwell;
Affection warm, and faith sincere,
And soft humanity, were there.
In agony, in death, resign'd,
She felt the wound she left behind.
Her infant image, here below,
Sits smiling on a father's woe;
Whom what awaits, while yet he strays
Along this lonely vale of days?
A pang, to secret sorrow dear;
A sigh, an unavailing tear;
Till time shall every grief remove,
With life, with memory, and with love.

COLLINS was born at Chichester, about 1720, and was educated at Winchester College, after which he was admitted into Magdalen College as a demy. In 1744, he abruptly left the University, and came to London as a literary adventurer; but unfortunately his perseverance was inadequate to the demands of such a laborious and uncertain vocation, so that his time was spent in drawing up plans of works that were never written, and struggling with the wants of the passing day. By the death of a relative, he suddenly became the possessor of about two thousand pounds; but no sooner were his real troubles ended, against which he had struggled manfully, than imaginary ones succeeded, under which he was laid prostrate; and he died in 1756, in a state of helpless insanity.

THE PASSIONS. AN ODE FOR MUSIC.

When Music, heavenly maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
Throng'd around her magic cell,
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possest beyond the Muse's painting;
By turns they felt the glowing mind,
Disturb'd, delighted, raised, refined:
Till once, 'tis said, when all were fired,
Fill'd with fury, rapt, inspired,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatch'd her instruments of sound,
And, as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each, for Madness ruled the hour,
Would prove his own expressive power.

First Fear his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewilder'd laid,
And back recoil'd, he knew not why,
E'en at the sound himself had made.

Next Anger rush'd, his eyes on fire,
In lightnings own'd his secret stings,
In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
And swept with hurried hand the strings.

With woful measures wan Despair—
Low sullen sounds his grief beguiled,
A solemn, strange, and mingled air,
'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.

But thou, O Hope! with eyes so fair,
What was thy delighted measure?
Still it whisper'd promised pleasure,
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail!
Still would her touch the strain prolong,
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
She call'd on Echo still through all the song;
And where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at every close,
And Hope enchanted smiled, and waved her golden hair.

And longer had she sung—but, with a frown,
Revenge impatient rose,
He threw his blood-stain'd sword in thunder down,
And, with a withering look,
The war-denouncing trumpet took,
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe!
And ever and anon he beat
The doubling drum with furious heat;
And though sometimes, each dreary pause between,
Dejected Pity at his side
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unalter'd mien,
While each strain'd ball of sight seem'd bursting from his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fix'd,
Sad proof of thy distressful state!
Of differing themes the veering song was mix'd,
And now it courted Love, now raving call'd on Hate.
With eyes up-raised, as one inspired,
Pale Melancholy sat retired,
And from her wild sequester'd seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Pour'd through the mellow horn her pensive soul:
And, dashing soft from rocks around,
Bubbling runnels join'd the sound;
Through glades and glooms the mingled measure stole,
Or o'er some haunted streams with fond delay,
Round an holy calm diffusing,
Love of peace, and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.

But, O, how alter'd was its sprightlier tone!
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
Her bow across her shoulders flung,
Her buskins gemm'd with morning dew,

Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
The hunter's call to Faun and Dryad known;
The oak-crown'd Sisters, and their chaste-eyed Queen,
Satyrs and Sylvan boys were seen,
Peeping from forth their alleys green;
Brown Exercise rejoiced to hear,
And Sport leapt up, and seized his beechen spear.

Last came Joy's ecstatic trial;
He, with viny crown advancing,
First to the lively pipe his hand addrest;
But soon he saw the brisk-awakening viol,
Whose sweet entrancing voice he loved the best.
They would have thought, who heard the strain,
They saw in Tempe's vale her native maids,
Amidst the festal sounding shades,
To some unwearied minstrel dancing;
While, as his flying fingers kiss'd the strings,
Love framed with Mirth a gay fantastic round;
Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound;
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repay,
Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.

O Music! sphere-descended maid,
Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid,
Why, Goddess, why to us denied,
Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
As, in that loved Athenian bower,
You learn'd an all-commanding power,
Thy mimic soul, O nymph endear'd,
Can well recall what then it heard.
Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
Arise, as in that elder time,
Warm, energetic, chaste, sublime!
Thy wonders, in that god-like age,
Fill thy recording Sister's page—
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age;
E'en all at once together found
Cecilia's mingled world of sound—
O, bid our vain endeavours cease,
Revive the just designs of Greece:
Return in all thy simple state!
Confirm the tales her sons relate!

ODE.

How sleep the brave, who sink to rest,
By all their country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallow'd mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By Fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There Honour comes, a pilgrim grey,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay,
And Freedom shall a while repair
To dwell a weeping hermit there!

THE WATER SPIRIT.

These, too, thou'lt sing! for well thy magic Muse
  Can to the topmost heaven of grandeur soar;
  Or stoop to wail the swain that is no more!
Ah, homely swains! your homeward steps ne'er lose;
  Let not dank Will mislead you to the heath:
Dancing in mirky night, o'er fen and lake,
  He glows, to draw you downward to your death,
In his bewitch'd, low, marshy, willow brake!
What though far off, from some dark dell espied,
  His glimmering mazes cheer th' excursive sight?
Yet turn, ye wanderers, turn your steps aside,
  Nor trust the guidance of that faithless light;
For watchful, lurking, 'mid th' unrustling reed,
  At those mirk hours the wily monster lies,
And listens oft to hear the passing steed,
  And frequent round him rolls his sullen eyes,
If chance his savage wrath may some weak wretch surprise.

Ah, luckless swain, o'er all unblest, indeed!
  Whom late bewilder'd in the dank, dark fen,
  Far from his flocks, and smoking hamlet, then!
To that sad spot where hums the sedgy weed:
  On him, enraged, the fiend, in angry mood,
Shall never look with pity's kind concern,
  But instant, furious, raise the whelming flood
O'er its drown'd banks, forbidding all return!
  Or, if he meditate his wish'd escape,
To some dim hill that seems uprising near,

To his faint eye, the grim and grisly shape,
In all its terrors clad, shall wild appear.
Meantime the watery surge shall round him rise,
Pour'd sudden forth from every swelling source!
What now remains but tears and hopeless sighs?
His fear-shook limbs have lost their youthly force,
And down the waves he floats, a pale and breathless corse!

For him in vain his anxious wife shall wait,
Or wander forth to meet him on his way;
For him in vain at to-fall of the day,
His babes shall linger at th' unclosing gate!
Ah, ne'er shall he return! Alone, if night,
Her travell'd limbs in broken slumbers steep,
With drooping willows drest, his mournful sprite
Shall visit sad, perchance, her silent sleep:
Then he, perhaps, with moist and watery hand,
Shall fondly seem to press her shuddering cheek,
And with his blue-swoln face before her stand,
And, shivering cold, these piteous accents speak:
"Pursue, dear wife, thy daily toils, pursue,
At dawn or dusk, industrious as before;
Nor e'er of me one helpless thought renew,
While I lie weltering on the ozier'd shore,
Drown'd by the Kelpie's wrath, nor e'er shall aid thee more!"

Unbounded is thy range; with varied skill
Thy Muse may, like those feath'ry tribes which spring
From their rude rocks, extend her skirting wing
Round the moist marge of each cold Hebrid isle,
To that hoar pile which still its ruin shows:
In whose small vaults a pigmy-folk is found,
Whose bones the delver with his spade upthrows,
And culls them, wond'ring, from the hallow'd ground!
Or thither, where beneath the show'ry west,
The mighty kings of three fair realms are laid:
Once foes, perhaps, together now they rest,
No slaves revere them, and no wars invade:
Yet frequent now, at midnight's solemn hour,
The rifted mounds their yawning cells unfold,
And forth the monarchs stalk with sov'reign pow'r,
In pageant robes, and wreath'd with sheeny gold,
And on their twilight tombs aërial council hold.

From Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland.

This celebrated novelist was born on the banks of the Leven, in Dunbartonshire, North Britain, in 1720. As medicine was selected for his future profession, Smollett was apprenticed to a surgeon in Glasgow, after which he studied at the medical classes of the University of Edinburgh. He then received an appointment as surgeon's mate in the navy, and accompanied the ill-fated expedition to Carthagena, in 1741, an event which he has admirably described in his Roderick Random. During his short period of service in the navy, also, he acquired that acquaintanceship with sea characters, in the delineation of which he has never been equalled.

As Smollett had no prospect of success as a physician, and was conscious of his own intellectual powers and literary acquirements, he resolved to devote himself to authorship; and in this department his numerous writings and remarkable industry are too well known to require further notice. His poems, which are few and incidental, exhibit feeling, fancy, and harmony, of a superior order, and it is probable that the necessity of writing for subsistence alone prevented him from devoting himself more sedulously to the less profitable cultivation of poetry, in which he was capable of attaining such high excellence. After a life of over-wrought industry, intermingled with misfortune, he died near Leghorn, whither he had repaired for the recovery of his health, on the 21st of October, 1771.

THE TEARS OF SCOTLAND: WRITTEN IN 1746.

Mourn, hapless Caledonia, mourn
Thy banish'd peace, thy laurels torn!
Thy sons, for valour long renown'd,
Lie slaughter'd on their native ground;
Thy hospitable roofs no more,
Invite the stranger to the door;
In smoky ruins sunk they lie,
The monuments of cruelty.

The wretched owner sees afar
His all become the prey of war;
Bethinks him of his babes and wife,
Then smites his breast, and curses life.
Thy swains are famish'd on the rocks,
Where once they fed their wanton flocks:
Thy ravish'd virgins shriek in vain;
Thy infants perish on the plain.

What boots it then, in every clime,
Through the wide-spreading waste of time,
Thy martial glory, crown'd with praise,
Still shone with undiminish'd blaze?
Thy towering spirit now is broke,
Thy neck is bended to the yoke.
What foreign arms could never quell,
By civil rage and rancour fell.

The rural pipe and merry lay
No more shall cheer the happy day:
No social scenes of gay delight
Beguile the dreary winter night:
No strains but those of sorrow flow,
And nought be heard but sounds of woe,
While the pale phantoms of the slain
Glide nightly o'er the silent plain.

O baneful cause, oh! fatal morn,
Accursed to ages yet unborn!
The sons against their father stood,
The parent shed his children's blood.
Yet, when the rage of battle ceased,
The victor's soul was not appeased:
The naked and forlorn must feel
Devouring flames, and murd'ring steel!

The pious mother, doom'd to death,
Forsaken wanders o'er the heath,
The bleak wind whistles round her head,
Her helpless orphans cry for bread;
Bereft of shelter, food, and friend,
She views the shades of night descend;
And stretch'd beneath th' inclement skies,
Weeps o'er her tender babes, and dies.

While the warm blood bedews my veins,
And unimpair'd remembrance reigns,
Resentment of my country's fate,
Within my filial breast shall beat;
And, spite of her insulting foe,
My sympathizing verse shall flow:
"Mourn, hapless Caledonia, mourn
Thy banish'd peace, thy laurels torn."

SONG.

To fix her—'twere a task as vain
To count the April drops of rain,
To sow in Afric's barren soil,
Or tempests hold within a toil.

I know it, friend, she 's light as air,
False as the fowler's artful snare;

Inconstant as the passing wind,
As winter's dreary frost unkind.

She 's such a miser too in love,
Its joys she 'll neither share nor prove;
Though hundreds of gallants await
From her victorious eyes their fate.

Blushing at such inglorious reign,
I sometimes strive to break her chain;
My reason summon to my aid,
Resolved no more to be betray'd.

Ah! friend, 'tis but a short-lived trance,
Dispell'd by one enchanting glance;
She need but look, and, I confess,
Those looks completely curse or bless.

So soft, so elegant, so fair,
Sure something more than human 's there;
I must submit, for strife is vain,
'Twas destiny that forged the chain.

ODE TO LEVEN WATER.

On Leven's banks, while free to rove,
And tune the rural pipe to love;
I envied not the happiest swain
That ever trod th' Arcadian plain.
Pure stream, in whose transparent wave
My youthful limbs I wont to lave;
No torrents stain thy limpid source;
No rocks impede thy dimpling course,
That sweetly warbles o'er its bed,
With white, round, polish'd pebbles spread;
While, lightly poised, the scaly brood
In myriads cleave thy crystal flood;
The springing trout in speckled pride;
The salmon, monarch of the tide;
The ruthless pike, intent on war;
The silver eel, and mottled par.
Devolving from thy parent lake,
A charming maze thy waters make,

By bowers of birch, and groves of pine,
And hedges flower'd with eglantine.
Still on thy banks so gaily green,
May numerous herds and flocks be seen,
And lasses chanting o'er the pail,
And shepherds piping in the dale:
And ancient faith that knows no guile,
And industry embrown'd with toil,
And hearts resolved, and hands prepared,
The blessings they enjoy to guard.

SONG.

ON AN ARROGANT COLLEGE TUTOR, WHOSE FATHER HAD BEEN A BRICKLAYER, AND WHOSE MOTHER SOLD PIES.

Come listen, ye students of every degree,
I sing of a wit and a tutor *perdie*,
A statesman profound, a critic immense,
In short, a mere jumble of learning and sense;
And yet of his talents though laudably vain,
His own family arts he could never attain.

His father intending his fortune to build,
In his youth would have taught him the trowel to wield,
But the mortar of discipline never would stick,
For his skull was secured by a facing of brick;
And with all his endeavours of patience and pain,
The skill of his sire he could never attain.

His mother, a housewife, neat, artful, and wise,
Renown'd for her delicate biscuit and pies,
Soon alter'd his studies, but flattering his taste,
From the raising of wall to the rearing of paste;
But all her instructions were fruitless and vain,
The pie-making mystery he ne'er could attain.

Yet true to his race, in his labours were seen
A jumble of both their professions, I ween;
For when his own genius he ventured to trust,
His pies seem'd of brick, and his houses of crust;
Then, good Mr. Tutor, pray be not so vain,
Since your family arts you could never attain.

The distinguished author of The Pleasures of Imagination was born on the 9th of November, 1721, at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. As he was of Dissenting parents, he was educated in their Presbyterian principles; and in his eighteenth year he was sent to the University of Edinburgh, chiefly at the expense of his own class of religionists, with the purpose of qualifying him for being a Dissenting minister. But as his education progressed, other views occurred, so that he honourably refunded the expenses of his education, and devoted himself to the study of medicine, as his future profession. Of his proficiency at College, in the study of classical learning, he afforded ample proof in his chief work, The Pleasures of Imagination, which he published at the early age of twenty-three. He presented the copy to Dodsley, and demanded 120*l.* for the manuscript: but at this startling price, for the work of an unknown youth, the worthy publisher demurred. He showed the work to Pope; when the latter having glanced over a few pages, said, "Don't be niggardly about the terms, for this is no every-day writer."

Previously to this experiment upon the public taste, Akenside had studied for three years at the University of Leyden; and in May, 1744, he took the degree of Doctor of Medicine. In the following year, he published a collection of Odes; after which he seriously addressed himself to the duties of his profession, by endeavouring to gain practice in Southampton, where he first settled. But although he endeavoured to become popular, not only by professional skill and attention, but by a zealous devotedness to the liberal side of politics, his efforts were unsuccessful, for Dr. Stonehouse occupied the field, to the exclusion of every other candidate. Akenside therefore resigned the contest, and removed to Hampstead; but after remaining there for two years, without being able to establish himself, he resolved to try the metropolis. In London, he experienced those difficulties usual to a profession which depends so much for success upon caprice or accident, and would have soon been involved in serious difficulties, but for the kindness of Mr. Dyson, who generously allowed him 300*l.* a year. By this liberal aid he was enabled to persevere in his efforts, until he had established for himself a respectable practice, although it was still inadequate to his hopes, and perhaps his professional merits. He was still busy in presenting himself to public notice, by publishing medical essays and observations, and delivering lectures, when his career was terminated by a putrid fever, on the 23d of January, 1770.

The popularity of Akenside, as a poet, has scarcely been improved by time, and his name has been almost lost sight of in the transition of the public taste, from the classical to the modern school of poetry. Still, however, The Pleasures of Imagination will continue to charm, by the grandeur and beauty of its images, notwithstanding the pomp and profusion of language with which they are sometimes obscured. Of this poem, Dr. Johnson very judiciously observes: "It has undoubtedly a just claim to very particular notice, as an example of great felicity of genius, and uncommon amplitude of acquisitions, of a young mind stored with images, and much exercised in combining and comparing them. The subject is well chosen, as it includes all images that can strike or please, and thus comprises every species of poetical delight. The parts seem artificially disposed, with sufficient coherence, so that they cannot change their place without injury to the general design." He complains, however, with equal justice, of the poet's amplitude of language, in which his meaning is frequently obscured, and sometimes wholly buried. Besides this work, Akenside published a collection of Lyric poetry; but his spirit seems to have become constrained and cold, as soon as it was fettered by the coercions of rhyme, and his Odes are, therefore, with some sparkling exceptions, decidedly inferior to his productions in blank verse. He intended to revise his principal work, but died before he had completed this design. The portion of the improved edition which he left is contracted in some parts, and expanded in others; but the original inspiration, under which he had written the work, does not appear to have been ready at his call, so that in many cases his ardour is cooled, and his diffuseness extended.



INSCRIPTION FOR A GROTTO.

To me, whom in their lays the shepherds call
Actea, daughter of the neighbouring stream,
This cave belongs. The fig-tree and the vine,
Which o'er the rocky entrance downward shoot,
Were placed by Glycon. He with cowslips pale,
Primrose, and purple lychnis, deck'd the green
Before my threshold, and my shelving walls
With honeysuckle cover'd. Here at noon,
Lull'd by the murmur of my rising fount,
I slumber: here my clustering fruits I tend:
Or from the humid flowers, at break of day,
Fresh garlands weave, and chase from all my bounds
Each thing impure or noxious. Enter in,
O stranger, undismay'd. Nor bat, nor toad,
Here lurks: and if thy breast of blameless thoughts
Approve thee, not unwelcome shalt thou tread,
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TO SLEEP. AN ODE.

Thou silent power, whose welcome sway,
Charms every anxious thought away;
In whose divine oblivion drown'd,
Sore pain and weary toil grow mild,
Love is with kinder looks beguiled,
And Grief forgets her fondly-cherish'd wound;
O whither hast thou flown, indulgent god,
God of kind shadows and of healing dews?
Whom dost thou touch with thy Lethæan rod?
Around whose temples now thy opiate airs diffuse?

Lo, Midnight from her starry reign
Looks awful down on earth and main.
The tuneful birds lie hush'd in sleep,
With all that crop the verdant food,
With all that skim the crystal flood,
Or haunt the caverns of the rocky steep.
No rushing winds disturb the tufted bowers;
No wakeful sound the moonlight valley knows,
Save where the brook its liquid murmur pours,
And lulls the waving scene to more profound repose.

O let not me alone complain,
Alone invoke thy power in vain!
Descend, propitious, on my eyes;
Not from the couch that bears a crown,
Not from the courtly statesman's down,
Nor where the miser and his treasure lies:
Bring not the shapes that break the murderer's rest,
Nor those the hireling soldier loves to see,
Nor those which haunt the bigot's gloomy breast:
Far be their guilty nights, and far their dreams from me!

Nor yet those awful forms present,
For chiefs and heroes only meant:
The figured brass, the choral song,
The rescued people's glad applause,
The listening senate, and the laws
Fix'd by the counsels of Timoleon's tongue,
Are scenes too grand for fortune's private ways;
And though they shine in youth's ingenuous view,
The sober gainful arts of modern days
To such romantic thoughts have bid a long adieu.

I ask not, god of dreams, thy care
To banish Love's presentments fair:
Nor rosy cheek, nor radiant eye
Can arm him with such strong command,
That the young sorcerer's fatal hand
Shall round my soul his pleasing fetters tie.
Nor yet the courtier's hope, the giving smile
(A lighter phantom, and a baser chain)
Did e'er in slumber my proud lyre beguile
To lend the pomp of thrones her ill-according strain.

But, Morpheus, on thy balmy wing
Such honourable visions bring,
As soothed great Milton's injured age,
When in prophetic dreams he saw
The race unborn with pious awe
Imbibe each virtue from his heavenly page;
Or such as Mead's benignant fancy knows
When health's deep treasures, by his heart explored,
Have saved the infant from an orphan's woes,
Or to the trembling sire his age's hope restored.

AGAINST SUSPICION. An Ode.

Oh fly! 'tis dire Suspicion's mien;
And, meditating plagues unseen,
The sorceress hither bends:
Behold her torch in gall imbrued:
Behold—her garment drops with blood
Of lovers and of friends.

Fly far! already in your eyes
I see a pale suffusion rise;
And soon through every vein,
Soon will her secret venom spread,
And all your heart, and all your head,
Imbibe the potent stain.

Then many a demon will she raise
To vex your sleep, to haunt your ways;
While gleams of lost delight
Raise the dark tempest of the brain,
As lightning shines across the main
Through whirlwinds and through night.

No more can faith or candour move;
But each ingenuous deed of love,
Which reason would applaud,
Now, smiling o'er her dark distress,
Fancy malignant strives to dress
Like injury and fraud.

Farewell to Virtue's peaceful times:
Soon will you stoop to act the crimes
Which thus you stoop to fear:
Guilt follows guilt, and where the train
Begins with wrongs of such a stain,
What horrors form the rear!

'Tis thus to work her baleful power,
Suspicion waits the sullen hour
Of fretfulness and strife,
When care th' infirmer bosom wrings,
Or Eurus waves his murky wings
To damp the seats of life.

But come, forsake the scene unbless'd
Which first beheld your faithful breast
To groundless fears a prey:
Come, where with my prevailing lyre
The skies, the streams, the groves, conspire
To charm your doubts away.

Throned in the sun's descending car,
What power unseen diffuseth far
This tenderness of mind?
What genius smiles on yonder flood?
What god, in whispers from the wood,
Bids every thought be kind?

O thou, whate'er thy awful name,
Whose wisdom our untoward frame
With social love restrains;
Thou, who by fair affection's ties
Giv'st us to double all our joys
And half disarm our pains:

Let universal candour still,
Clear as yon heaven-reflecting rill,
Preserve my open mind;
Nor this nor that man's crooked ways
One sordid doubt within me raise
To injure human kind.

MAN'S IMMORTAL ASPIRATIONS.

Say, why was man so eminently raised
Amid the vast creation; why ordain'd
Through life and death to dart his piercing eye,
With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame;
But that th' Omnipotent might send him forth
In sight of mortal and immortal powers,
As on a boundless theatre, to run
The great career of justice; to exalt
His generous aim to all diviner deeds;
To chase each partial purpose from his breast;
And through the mists of passion and of sense,
And through the tossing tide of chance and pain,
To hold his course unfaltering, while the voice
Of truth and virtue, up the steep ascent
Of nature, calls him to his high reward,
Th' applauding smile of Heaven? Else wherefore burns
In mortal bosoms this unquenched hope,
That breathes from day to day sublimer things,
And mocks possession? wherefore darts the mind,
With such resistless ardour to embrace
Majestic forms; impatient to be free,
Spurning the gross control of wilful might;
Proud of the strong contention of her toils;
Proud to be daring? Who but rather turns
To heaven's broad fire his unconstrained view,
Than to the glimmering of a waxen flame?
Who that, from Alpine heights, his labouring eye
Shoots round the wide horizon, to survey
Nilus or Ganges rolling his bright wave
Through mountains, plains, through empires black with shade,
And continents of sand; will turn his gaze
To mark the windings of a scanty rill
That murmurs at his feet? The high-born soul
Disdains to rest her heaven-aspiring wing
Beneath its native quarry. Tired of earth
And this diurnal scene, she springs aloft
Through fields of air; pursues the flying storm;
Rides on the vollied lightning through the heavens;
Or, yoked with whirlwinds and the northern blast,
Sweeps the long tract of day. Then high she soars
The blue profound, and hovering round the sun
Beholds him pouring the redundant stream
Of light; beholds his unrelenting sway

Bend the reluctant planets to absolve
The fated rounds of time. Thence far effused
She darts her swiftness up the long career
Of devious comets; through its burning signs
Exulting measures the perennial wheel
Of nature, and looks back on all the stars,
Whose blended light, as with a milky zone,
Invests the orient. Now amazed she views
The empyreal waste, where happy spirits hold,
Beyond this concave heaven, their calm abode;
And fields of radiance, whose unfading light
Has travell'd the profound six thousand years,
Nor yet arrives in sight of mortal things.
Even on the barriers of the world untired
She meditates th' eternal depth below;
Till half recoiling, down the headlong steep
She plunges; soon o'erwhelm'd and swallow'd up
In that immense of being. There her hopes
Rest at the fated goal. For from the birth
Of mortal man, the sovereign Maker said,
That not in humble nor in brief delight,
Not in the fading echoes of renown,
Power's purple robes, nor pleasure's flowery lap,
The soul should find enjoyment: but from these
Turning disdainful to an equal good,
Through all th' ascent of things enlarge her view,
Till every bound at length should disappear,
And infinite perfection close the scene.

From Pleasures of Imagination: Book I.

SUPERIORITY OF MORAL TO MATERIAL GRANDEUR.

Look then abroad through nature, to the range
Of planets, suns, and adamantine spheres,
Wheeling unshaken through the void immense;
And speak, O man! does this capacious scene
With half that kindling majesty dilate
Thy strong conception, as when Brutus rose
Refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate,
Amid the crowd of patriots; and his arm
Aloft extending, like eternal Jove
When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
On Tully's name, and shook his crimson steel,
And bade the father of his country hail;

For lo! the tyrant prostrate on the dust,
And Rome again is free!

From Pleasures of Imagination: Book I.

USES OF THE SENSE OF THE RIDICULOUS.

Ask we for what fair end th' Almighty Sire
In mortal bosoms stirs this gay contempt,
These grateful pangs of laughter; from disgust
Educing pleasure? Wherefore, but to aid
The tardy steps of reason, and at once
By this prompt impulse urge us to depress
Wild Folly's aims? For though the sober light
Of Truth slow dawning on the watchful mind
At length unfolds, through many a subtile tie,
How these uncouth disorders end at last
In public evil; yet benignant Heaven,
Conscious how dim the dawn of truth appears
To thousands, conscious what a scanty pause
From labour and from care the wider lot
Of humble life affords for studious thought
To scan the maze of Nature, therefore stamp'd
These glaring scenes with characters of scorn,
As broad, as obvious to the passing clown
As to the letter'd sage's curious eye.

From Pleasures of Imagination: Book II.

SYMPATHY.

Wouldst thou then exchange
Those heart-ennobling sorrows for the lot
Of him who sits amid the gaudy herd
Of silent flatterers bending to his nod,
And o'er them, like a giant, casts his eye,
And says within himself, "I am a king,
And wherefore should the clamorous voice of woe
Intrude upon mine ear?" The dregs corrupt
Of barbarous ages, that Circæan draught
Of servitude and folly, have not yet,
Bless'd be th' eternal Ruler of the world!
Yet have not so dishonour'd, so deform'd
The native judgment of the human soul,
Nor so effaced the image of her sire.

From Pleasures of Imagination: Book II.

Both the time and place of this author's birth are unknown. He was brought up to the profession of medicine, and took the degree of Doctor; after which, he settled at St. Alban's, where he practised with reputation and success. He must have commenced the writing of poetry at an early period, as his epitaphs on Miss Gee and Mr. Strong are dated so early as 1736. He died at St. Alban's, at an advanced age, in 1788.

The chief poetical work of Dr. Cotton, is his Visions in Verse, which have gone through many editions, and obtained a high and merited popularity.

MARRIAGE.

Those awful words, "Till death do part,"
May well alarm the youthful heart:
No after-thought when once a wife,
The die is cast, and cast for life;
Yet thousands venture every day,
As some base passion leads the way.
Pert Silvia talks of wedlock scenes,
Though hardly enter'd on her teens;
Smiles on her whining spark, and hears
The sugar'd speech with raptured ears;
Impatient of a parent's rule,
She leaves her sire and weds a fool.
Want enters at the guardless door,
And Love is fled, to come no more.

Some few there are of sordid mould,
Who barter youth and bloom for gold;
Careless with what, or whom they mate,
Their ruling passion's all for state.
But Hymen, generous, just, and kind,
Abhors the mercenary mind:
Such rebels groan beneath his rod,
For Hymen's a vindictive god;
Be joyless every night, he said,
And barren be their nuptial bed.

Attend, my fair, to Wisdom's voice,
A better fate shall crown thy choice.
A married life, to speak the best,
Is all a lottery confest:
Yet if my fair one will be wise,
I will ensure my girl a prize;
Though not a prize to match thy worth,
Perhaps thy equal's not on earth.

'Tis an important point to know,
There's no perfection here below.
Man's an odd compound, after all,
And ever has been since the fall.

Say, that he loves you from his soul,
Still man is proud, nor brooks control.
And though a slave in Love's soft school,
In wedlock claims his right to rule.
The best, in short, has faults about him,
If few those faults, you must not flout him.
With some, indeed, you can't dispense,
As want of temper, and of sense.
For when the sun deserts the skies,
And the dull evening winters rise,
Then for a husband's social power,
To form the calm, conversive hour;
The treasures of thy breast explore,
From that rich mine to draw the ore;
Fondly each generous thought refine,
And give thy native gold to shine;
Show thee, as really thou art,
Though fair, yet fairer still at heart.
Say, when life's purple blossoms fade,
As soon they must, thou charming maid;
When in thy cheeks the roses die,
And sickness clouds that brilliant eye;
Say, when or age or pains invade,
And those dear limbs shall call for aid;
If thou art fetter'd to a fool,
Shall not his transient passion cool?
And when thy health and beauty end,
Shall thy weak mate persist a friend?
But to a man of sense, my dear,
Ev'n then thou lovely shalt appear;
He 'll share the griefs that wound thy heart,
And weeping claim the larger part;
Though age impairs that beauteous face,
He 'll prize the pearl beyond its case.

From Vision VII.

THE LAMB AND THE PIG.—A Fable.

Consult the moralist, you 'll find
That education forms the mind.
But education ne'er supplied
What ruling nature hath denied.
If you 'll the following page pursue,
My tale shall prove this doctrine true.
Since to the muse all brutes belong,
The Lamb shall usher in my song;

Whose snowy fleece adorn'd her skin,
Emblem of native white within.
Meekness and love possess'd her soul,
And innocence had crown'd the whole.
It chanced, in some unguarded hour,
(Ah! purity, precarious flower!
Let maidens of the present age
Tremble, when they peruse my page)
It chanced upon a luckless day,
The little wanton, full of play,
Rejoiced a thymy bank to gain,
But short the triumphs of her reign!
The treacherous slopes her fate foretell,
And soon the pretty trifler fell.
Beneath, a dirty ditch impress'd
Its mire upon her spotless vest.
What greater ill could lamb betide,
The butcher's barbarous knife beside?
The shepherd, wounded with her cries,
Straight to the bleating sufferer flies.
The lambkin in his arms he took,
And bore her to a neighbouring brook.
The silver streams her wool refined,
Her fleece in virgin whiteness shined.
Cleansed from pollution's every stain,
She join'd her fellows on the plain;
And saw afar the stinking shore,
But ne'er approach'd those dangers more.
The shepherd bless'd the kind event
And view'd his flock with sweet content.
To market next he shaped his way,
And bought provisions for the day.
But made, for winter's rich supply,
A purchase from a farmer's sty.
The children round their parent crowd,
And testify their mirth aloud.
They saw the stranger with surprise,
And all admired his little eyes.
Familiar grown, he shared their joys,
Shared too the porridge with the boys.
The females o'er his dress preside,
They wash his face, and scour his hide.
But daily more a Swine he grew,
For all these housewives e'er could do.
Hence let my youthful reader know,
That, once a hog, and always so.



SMART.

Christopher Smart was born at Shipbourne, Kent, on the 11th of April, 1722. He was educated at Durham School, and afterwards at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, where he made great proficiency in classical learning; but at the same time he involved himself, in consequence of his thoughtless prodigality, in expenses, which inflicted upon him the retribution of poverty during the rest of his life.

As Smart had cultivated poetry from his earliest years, he naturally wished to distinguish himself in this department at College; he accordingly became a candidate for the Seatonian prize, and obtained it no less than five times. The poems which he wrote on this occasion, upon the Attributes of the Divine Being, are decidedly the best of his productions.

In consequence of his success in these compositions, he conceived the idea of making a comfortable livelihood as an author; but in spite of his numerous productions, he carried with him to London his reckless habits of expense, which prevented him from having that command of time so essential for perfecting his works, and therefore they exhibited a falling off, which was the more inexcusable on account of his former excellence. After a life in which he exhibited all the improvidence, and experienced most of the hardships, for which authors were distinguished in the last century, he died on the 21st of May, 1771.

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FROM THE IMMENSITY OF THE SUPREME BEING.

What though th' Almighty's regal throne be raised
High o'er yon azure heav'n's exalted dome,
By mortal eye unkenn'd —where east, nor west,
Nor south, nor blust'ring north, has breath to blow ;
Albeit he there with angels and with saints
Holds conference, and to his radiant host
Ev'n face to face stands visibly confest :
Yet knows that nor in presence nor in power
Shines he less perfect here ; 'tis man's dim eye
That makes th' obscurity. He is the same,
Alike in all his universe the same.
Whether the mind along the spangled sky
Measure her pathless walk, studious to view
Thy works of vaster fabric, where the planets
Weave their harmonious rounds, their march directing
Still faithful, still inconstant to the sun ;
Or where the comet through space infinite
(Though whirling worlds oppose, and globes of fire)
Darts, like a javelin, to his destined goal :
Or where in heav'n above the heav'n of heav'ns
Burn brighter suns, and goodlier planets roll
With satellites more glorious—Thou art there.
Or whether on the ocean's boist'rous back
Thou ride triumphant, and with outstretch'd arm
Curb the wild winds, and discipline the billows,
The suppliant sailor finds thee there, his chief,
His only help—When thou rebuk'st the storm,
It ceases—and the vessel gently glides
Along the glassy level of the calm.

FROM THE POWER OF THE SUPREME BEING.

" Tremble, thou earth !" the anointed poet said,
" At God's bright presence, tremble, all ye mountains,
And all ye hillocks on the surface bound."
Then once again, ye glorious thunders, roll,
The muse with transport hears ye ; once again
Convulse the solid continent, and shake,
Grand music of Omnipotence, the isles.
'Tis thy terrific voice, thou God of power,
'Tis thy terrific voice ; all nature hears it.
Awaken'd and alarm'd ; she feels its force,

In every spring she feels it, every wheel,
And every movement of her vast machine.
Behold! quakes Appenine; behold! recoils
Athos, and all the hoary-headed Alps
Leap from their bases at the godlike sound.
But what is this, celestial though the note,
And proclamation of the reign supreme,
Compared with such as, for a mortal ear
Too great, amaze the incorporeal worlds?

FROM AN ODE ON AN EAGLE CONFINED IN A COLLEGE COURT.

Imperial bird, who wont to soar
High o'er the rolling cloud,
Where Hyperborean mountains hoar
Their heads in ether shroud;—
Thou servant of Almighty Jove,
Who, free and swift as thought, could'st rove
To the bleak north's extremest goal;—
Thou, who magnanimous could'st bear
The sovereign thund'rer's arms in air,
And shake thy native pole!—

Oh, cruel fate! what barbarous hand,
What more than Gothic ire,
At some fierce tyrant's dread command,
To check thy daring fire,
Has placed thee in this servile cell,
Where discipline and dulness dwell,
Where genius ne'er was seen to roam;
Where every selfish soul's at rest,
Nor ever quits the carnal breast,
But lurks and sneaks at home!

Though dimm'd thine eye, and clipt thy wing,
So grov'ling! once so great!
The grief-inspired muse shall sing
In tend'rest lays thy fate.
What time by thee scholastic pride
Takes his precise pedantic stride,
Nor on thy misery casts a care,
The stream of love ne'er from his heart
Flows out, to act fair pity's part;
But stinks, and stagnates there.
* * * * *

This distinguished poet, novelist, and historian, was born at Elphin, in the county of Roscommon, in Ireland, in 1729. After studying the classics at a private school, he entered Trinity College, Dublin, where he gave no indications of that genius for which he was afterwards so remarkable. As he had chosen the medical profession, he went to the University of Edinburgh, but he was obliged to make an abrupt departure from that city in consequence of becoming security to a considerable amount for a class-fellow. He betook himself to Rotterdam, from which place he traversed Flanders, France, and part of Germany, in the style which he has described in his Vicar of Wakefield—penniless, and dependent upon logic or his flute for his daily support. He returned to London in 1758, in the same poetical state as to finances, but with his mind enriched with observations of foreign countries, which he has so admirably expressed in his poem of The Traveller. On entering the metropolis, he offered his services to several apothecaries as a journeyman; but his apparel and *brogue* were against him, and, after several shifts, he resolved to depend upon his pen for subsistence. His first attempt was the Chinese Letters, after which he wrote his admirable novel, The Vicar of Wakefield. The sum which he received for the copyright of the latter work relieved his immediate wants, without advancing his future prospects, as it was not published till some time afterwards, when he had attained poetical celebrity; but in 1765 appeared The Traveller, of which Johnson declared there had not been so fine a poem since the days of Pope. It at once established the reputation of Goldsmith, in consequence of which he was welcomed into the literary circles, and eagerly sought after by the publishers.

Having thus tasted the sweets of authorship in the form of profit and fame, Goldsmith resumed his labours, but instead of following the track in which he had commenced with such success, he directed his efforts to prose, in which his elegance and clearness of style have never been excelled. He wrote his History of England in a series of letters; also a History of England, in four volumes, a History of Rome, and his History of the Earth and Animated Nature, from all which he derived considerable profits. Indeed, the charm which his genius and exquisite style imparted to mere works of compilation, gave them a popularity which surpassed that of the original writings of other historians. He also turned his attention to dramatic writing, and in 1767, his comedy of The Good-natured Man was brought on the stage, at Covent Garden. But notwithstanding its merits, the caprice of public taste prevented it from being successful, although it had a temporary run, and yielded the author five hundred pounds.

Goldsmith now resumed his poetical labours, and published in 1770 his Deserted Village, a work, the materials of which he had been four or five years in collecting, while two years had been spent in constructing it; and the elaboration of its varied and beautiful pictures, shows how worthily such application was bestowed. Indeed, than this admirable poem, it would be difficult to point out one in the whole English language more pregnant with ideas and descriptions, or more terse and vigorous in expression. Two years afterwards, he made a second attempt in the dramatic department, and produced his comedy of She Stoops to Conquer, which was acted at Covent Garden, with such success, as to console him for the failure of The Good-natured Man.

Although Goldsmith during the course of his public life had been indefatigable as a writer, and had received for his original works and compilations as much as would have secured him in comparative affluence, yet he was almost continually in pecuniary difficulties. This was occasioned by his love of gambling, and by his indiscriminating generosity, which was continually imposed upon by tales of suffering and distress, whether true or false. His affairs in consequence became deranged, and this circumstance preying upon his mind is supposed to have accelerated his death, which occurred on the 4th of April, 1774. Goldsmith's conversation, we are informed, was a complete contrast to the elegance and clearness of his written compositions; and hence the force of the sarcasm in which he is described as

"Noll,
Who wrote like an angel, and talk'd like poor Poll."



GOLDSMITH.

EDWIN AND ANGELINA.

" Turn, gentle Hermit of the dale,
And guide my lonely way,
To where yon taper cheers the vale
With hospitable ray.

" For here forlorn and lost I tread,
With fainting steps and slow;
Where wilds, immeasurably spread,
Seem length'ning as I go."

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"Here to the houseless child of want
My door is open still;
And though my portion is but scant,
I give it with good will.

"Then turn to-night, and freely share
Whate'er my cell bestows;
My rushy couch and frugal fare,
My blessing and repose.

"No flocks that range the valley free,
To slaughter I condemn:
Taught by that Power that pities me,
I learn to pity them:

"But from the mountain's grassy side
A guiltless feast I bring;
A scrip with herbs and fruits supplied,
And water from the spring.

"Then, pilgrim, turn, thy cares forego;
All earth-born cares are wrong:
Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long."

Soft as the dew from heaven descends,
His gentle accents fell;
The modest stranger lowly bends,
And follows to the cell.

Far in a wilderness obscure
The lonely mansion lay;
A refuge to the neighb'ring poor,
And strangers led astray.

No stores beneath its humble thatch
Required a master's care;
The wicket opening with a latch,
Received the harmless pair.

And now, when busy crowds retire
To take their evening rest,
The hermit trimm'd his little fire,
And cheer'd his pensive guest:

And spread his vegetable store,
And gaily press'd and smiled;
And, skill'd in legendary lore,
The lingering hours beguiled.

*

Around, in sympathetic mirth,
Its tricks the kitten tries;
The cricket chirrups on the hearth;
The crackling faggot flies.

But nothing could a charm impart
To soothe the stranger's woe;
For grief was heavy at his heart,
And tears began to flow.

His rising cares the Hermit spied,
With answering care oppress'd:
And, "Whence, unhappy youth," he cried,
"The sorrows of thy breast?

"From better habitations spurn'd,
Reluctant dost thou rove?
Or grieve for friendship unreturn'd,
Or unregarded love?

"Alas! the joys that fortune brings
Are trifling, and decay;
And those who prize the paltry things,
More trifling still than they.

"And what is friendship but a name,
A charm that lulls to sleep;
A shade that follows wealth or fame,
But leaves the wretch to weep?

"And love is still an emptier sound,
The modern fair one's jest:
On earth unseen, or only found
To warm the turtle's nest.

"For shame, fond youth, thy sorrows hush,
And spurn the sex," he said:
But while he spoke, a rising blush
His love-lorn guest betray'd.

Surprised he sees new beauties rise,
Swift mantling to the view;
Like colours o'er the morning skies,
As bright, as transient too.

The bashful look, the rising breast,
Alternate spread alarms:
The lovely stranger stands confest
A maid in all her charms.

And, "Ah! forgive a stranger rude,
A wretch forlorn," she cried:
"Whose feet unhallow'd thus intrude
Where Heaven and you reside.

"But let a maid thy pity share,
Whom love has taught to stray;
Who seeks for rest, but finds despair
Companion of her way.

"My father lived beside the Tyne,
A wealthy lord was he;
And all his wealth was mark'd as mine,
He had but only me.

"To win me from his tender arms,
Unnumber'd suitors came:
Who praised me for imputed charms,
And felt, or feign'd, a flame.

"Each hour a mercenary crowd
With richest proffers strove:
Amongst the rest young Edwin bow'd,
But never talk'd of love.

"In humble, simplest habit clad,
No wealth nor power had he;
Wisdom and worth were all he had,
But these were all to me.

"And when, beside me in the dale,
He caroll'd lays of love,
His breath lent fragrance to the gale,
And music to the grove.

"The blossom opening to the day,
The dews of heav'n refined,
Could nought of purity display
To emulate his mind.

"The dew, the blossom on the tree,
With charms inconstant shine;
Their charms were his, but, woe to me,
Their constancy was mine.

"For still I tried each fickle art,
Importunate and vain;
And while his passion touch'd my heart,
I triumph'd in his pain.

"Till, quite dejected with my scorn,
He left me to my pride;
And sought a solitude forlorn,
In secret, where he died.

"But mine the sorrow, mine the fault,
And well my life shall pay;
I'll seek the solitude he sought,
And stretch me where he lay.

"And there forlorn, despairing, hid
"I'll lay me down and die;
'Twas so for me that Edwin did,
And so for him will I."

"Forbid it, Heaven!" the Hermit cried,
And clasp'd her to his breast:
The wondering fair one turn'd to chide—
'Twas Edwin's self that prest.

"Turn, Angelina, ever dear,
My charmer, turn to see
Thy own, thy long-lost Edwin here,
Restored to love and thee.

"Thus let me hold thee to my heart,
And every care resign:
And shall we never, never part,
My life—my all that's mine?

"No, never, from this hour to part,
We'll live and love so true,
The sigh that rends thy constant heart,
Shall break thy Edwin's too."

HOLLAND.

To men of other minds my fancy flies,
Embosom'd in the deep where Holland lies.
Methinks her patient sons before me stand,
Where the broad ocean leans against the land,
And, sedulous to stop the coming tide,
Lift the tall rampire's artificial pride.
Onward, methinks, and diligently slow,
The firm connected bulwark seems to grow;

Spreads its long arms amidst the watery roar,
Scoops out an empire, and usurps the shore;
While the pent ocean rising o'er the pile,
Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile;
The slow canal, the yellow-blossom'd vale,
The willow-tufted bank, the gliding sail,
The crowded mart, the cultivated plain,
A new creation rescued from his reign.
Thus, while around the wave-subjected soil
Impels the native to repeated toil,
Industrious habits in each bosom reign,
And industry begets a love of gain.
Hence all the good from opulence that springs,
With all those ills superfluous treasure brings,
Are here display'd. Their much-loved wealth imparts
Convenience, plenty, elegance, and arts;
But view them closer, craft and fraud appear,
E'en liberty itself is barter'd here.
At gold's superior charms all freedom flies,
The needy sell it, and the rich man buys;
A land of tyrants, and a den of slaves,
Here wretches seek dishonourable graves,
And calmly bent, to servitude conform,
Dull as their lakes that slumber in the storm.
Heavens! how unlike their Belgic sires of old!
Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold;
War in each breast, and freedom on each brow;
How much unlike the sons of Britain now!

From The Traveller.

THE COUNTRY CLERGYMAN.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild;
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was, to all the country dear,
And passing rich, with forty pounds a year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wish'd to change, his place;
Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power,
By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour;

Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize,
More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train,
He chid their wand'rings, but relieved their pain:
The long-remember'd beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruin'd spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claim'd kindred there, and had his claims allow'd;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talk'd the night away;
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shoulder'd his crutch, and show'd how fields were won.
Pleased with his guests, the good man learn'd to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings lean'd to Virtue's side;
But in his duty, prompt at every call,
He watch'd and wept, he pray'd and felt, for all:
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries,
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies;
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismay'd,
The reverend champion stood. At his control,
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whisper'd praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorn'd the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remain'd to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With ready zeal, each honest rustic ran;
E'en children follow'd with endearing wile,
And pluck'd his gown, to share the good man's smile:
His ready smile a parent's warmth exprest,
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distrest!
To them his heart, his love, his griefs, were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

From The Deserted Village.

Was born in Dublin, in 1729. In consequence of an early love of theatricals, he commenced life as a strolling player, and continued in that profession amidst all its uncertainties and privations, with only a few intervals, till his death, which occurred in 1773. Poor Cunningham had the usual misfortunes of a poet added to the sufficiently numerous hardships that fall to the lot of a strolling actor; for his poetry, beautiful though it was, procured him nothing but disappointment. His amiable and gentle manners endeared him to all who knew him, and although too late to cheer or benefit their author, the public taste did justice to his talents.

FANNY OF THE DALE.

Let the declining damask rose
With envious grief look pale;
The summer bloom more freely glows
In Fanny of the Dale.

Is there a sweet that decks the field,
Or scents the morning gale,
Can such a vernal fragrance yield,
As Fanny of the Dale?

The painted belles, at court revered,
Look lifeless, cold, and stale;
How faint their beauties, when compared
With Fanny of the Dale!

The willows bind Pastora's brows,
Her fond advances fail;
For Damon pays his warmest vows
To Fanny of the Dale.

Might honest truth, at last, succeed,
And artless love prevail;
Thrice happy could he tune his reed,
With Fanny of the Dale.

THE MILLER.

A BALLAD.

In a plain pleasant cottage, conveniently neat,
With a mill and some meadows—a freehold estate,
A well-meaning miller, by labour, supplies
Those blessings that Grandeur to great ones denies:

No passions to plague him, no cares to torment,
His constant companions are health and content;
Their lordships in lace may remark, if they will,
He 's honest, though daub'd with the dust of his mill.

Ere the lark's early carols salute the new day,
He springs from his cottage as jocund as May;
He cheerfully whistles, regardless of care,
Or sings the last ballad he bought at the fair:
While courtiers are toil'd in the cobwebs of state,
Or bribing elections, in hopes to be great,
No fraud or ambition his bosom e'er fill,
Contented he works, if there 's grist for his mill.

On Sunday bedeck'd in his homespun array,
At church he 's the loudest to chant or to pray;
He sits to a dinner of plain English food,
Though simple the pudding, his appetite 's good.
At night, when the priest and exciseman are gone,
He quaffs at the alehouse with Roger and John,
Then reels to his pillow, and dreams of no ill;
No monarch more blest than the man of the mill.

EVENING.

O'er the heath the heifer strays
Free—(the furrow'd task is done)
Now the village windows blaze,
Burnish'd by the setting sun.

Now he hides behind the hill,
Sinking from a golden sky;
Can the pencil's mimic skill,
Copy the refulgent dye?

Trudging as the ploughmen go
(To the smoking hamlet bound),
Giant-like their shadows grow,
Lengthen'd o'er the level ground.

Where the rising forest spreads
Shelter for the lordly dome!
To their high-built airy beds,
See the rooks returning home.

As the lark with varied tune,
Carols to the evening loud;
Mark the mild resplendent moon,
Breaking through a parted cloud!

Now the hermit howlet peeps
From the bark, or twisted brake:
And the blue mist slowly creeps,
Curling on the silver lake.

As the trout in speckled pride,
Playful from its bosom springs;
To the banks, a ruffled tide
Verges in successive rings.

Tripping through the silken grass,
O'er the path-divided dale,
Mark the rose-complexion'd lass,
With her well-poised milking pail

Linnets, with unnumber'd notes,
And the cuckoo bird with two,
Tuning sweet their mellow throats,
Bid the setting sun adieu.

CLARINDA.

Clarinda's lips I fondly press'd,
While rapture fill'd each vein;
And as I touch'd her downy breast
It's tenant slept serene.

So soft a calm, in such a part,
Betrays a peaceful mind;
Whilst my uneasy fluttering heart,
Would scarcely be confined.

A stubborn oak the shepherd sees,
Unmoved, when storms descend;
But, ah! to ev'ry sporting breeze,
The myrtle bough must bend.

Was born in 1733, and educated at Westminster School, and afterwards at Trinity College, Cambridge. At the latter place it appears his conduct was so irregular as to procure the dislike of his more studious contemporaries. He devoted himself to authorship as a profession, but his irregular and intemperate habits kept him always poor, as well as prevented him from reaching that excellence which he might otherwise have attained. He died on the 15th of December, 1764.

THE CIT'S COUNTRY BOX.

The wealthy Cit, grown old in trade,
Now wishes for the rural shade,
And buckles to his one-horse chair
Old Dobbin, or the founder'd mare;
While wedged in closely by his side,
Sits Madam, his unwieldy bride,
With Jacky on a stool before 'em,
And out they jog in due decorum.
Scarce past the turnpike half a mile,
How all the country seems to smile!
And as they slowly jog together,
The Cit commends the road and weather;
While Madam doats upon the trees,
And longs for every house she sees,
Admires its views, its situation,
And thus she opens her oration:—
What signify the loads of wealth,
Without that richest jewel, health?
Excuse the fondness of a wife,
Who doats upon your precious life!
Such ceaseless toil, such constant care,
Is more than human strength can bear.
One may observe it in your face—
Indeed, my dear, you break apace:
And nothing can your health repair,
But exercise and country air.
Sir Traffic has a house, you know,
About a mile from Cheney-Row;
He 's a good man, indeed 'tis true,
But not so warm, my dear, as you:
And folks are always apt to sneer—
One would not be out-done, my dear!
Sir Traffic's name so well applied
Awaked his brother merchant's pride;
And Thrifty, who had all his life
Paid utmost deference to his wife,

Confess'd her arguments had reason,
And by th' approaching summer season,
Draws a few hundreds from the stocks,
And purchases his Country Box.
Some three or four miles out of town
(An hour's ride will bring you down),
He fixes on his choice abode,
Not half a furlong from the road:
And so convenient does it lay,
The stages pass it every day:
And then so snug, so mighty pretty,
To have a house so near the City!
Take but your places at the Boar
You 're set down at the very door.
Well then, suppose them fix'd at last,
White-washing, painting, scrubbing, past,
Hugging themselves in ease and clover,
With all the fuss of moving over;
Lo, a new heap of whims are bred!
And wanton in my lady's head.
Well to be sure, it must be own'd,
It is a charming spot of ground;
So sweet a distance for a ride,
And all about so countrified!
'Twould come but to a trifling price
To make it quite a paradise;
I cannot bear those nasty rails,
Those ugly broken mouldy pales:
Suppose, my dear, instead of these,
We build a railing, all Chinese.
Although one hates to be exposed,
'Tis dismal to be thus enclosed;
One hardly any object sees—
I wish you'd fell those odious trees.
Objects continual passing by
Were something to amuse the eye;
But to be pent within the walls—
One might as well be at St. Paul's.
Our house, beholders would adore,
Was there a level lawn before,
Nothing its views to incommode,
But quite laid open to the road;
While every traveller in amaze,
Should on our little mansion gaze,
And pointing to the choice retreat,
Cry, That 's Sir Thrifty's country seat.

No doubt her arguments prevail,
For Madam's taste can never fail.
Blest age! when all men may procure,
The title of a Connoisseur;
When noble and ignoble herd
Are govern'd by a single word;
Though, like the royal German dames,
It bears a hundred Christian names;
As Genius, Fancy, Judgment, Goût,
Whim, Caprice, Je-ne-scai-quoi, Virtù,
Which appellations all describe
Taste, and the modern tasteful tribe.
Now bricklayers, carpenters, and joiners,
With Chinese artists, and designers,
Produce their schemes of alteration,
To work this wondrous reformation.
The useful dome, which secret stood,
Embosom'd in the yew-tree's wood,
The traveller with amazement sees
A temple, Gothic, or Chinese,
With many a bell and tawdry rag on,
And crested with a sprawling dragon;
A wooden arch is bent astride
A ditch of water, four feet wide,
With angles, curves, and zigzag lines,
From Halfpenny's exact designs.
In front a level lawn is seen,
Without a shrub upon the green,
Where Taste would want its first great law,
But for the skulking, sly ha-ha,
By whose miraculous assistance,
You gain a prospect two fields distance.
And now from Hyde Park Corner come
The gods of Athens, and of Rome.
Here squabby Cupids take their places,
With Venus, and the clumsy Graces:
Apollo there, with aim so clever,
Stretches his leaden bow for ever;
And there, without the power to fly,
Stands fix'd a tip-toe Mercury.
The villa thus completely graced,
All own that Thrifty has a Taste;
And Madam's female friends, and cousins,
With common-council-men, by dozens,
Flock every Sunday to the Seat,
To stare about them—and to eat.

THIS poet, who has been termed the British Juvenal, was born in Westminster, in 1731. He received his education at Westminster, but such was his carelessness there, that when he was sent to Oxford he was refused admission into the University, from his deficiency in classical learning. He was, however, admitted into orders, and inducted into an humble Welsh Curacy; but here his stay was not long. He returned to London, and soon after succeeded his father as Curate and Lecturer of St. John's. It was not until he had reached the mature age of thirty, that he came forward publicly as an author; and The Rosciad, which he published in 1761, at once raised him to a high rank as a satirist. After several bickerings with the actors he had lampooned, and whom he treated in consequence with double severity, he embarked in the stormy politics of Wilkes, and wrote a biting satire against the Scots, entitled, The Prophecy of Famine, which obtained for the time an extraordinary popularity. His next attack was upon Hogarth, who retaliated with his inimitable powers of caricature, and the literary world was regaled with an unprecedented combat, in which the pen and the pencil of satire strove with each other for the mastery. In his habits of living, Churchill was careless and scandalously irregular, and his career was brief, for he died in 1764, at the age of thirty-three. His works throughout exhibit great vigour of thought, and terrible powers of sarcasm, but as they were written upon passing characters and events, they have long ceased to possess a general interest.

MODERN CRITICISM.

Cold-blooded critics, by enervate sires
Scarce hammer'd out, when Nature's feeble fires
Glimmer'd their last; whose sluggish blood, half froze,
Creeps lab'ring through the veins; whose heart ne'er glows
With fancy-kindled heat;—a servile race,
Who in mere want of fault, all merit place;
Who blind obedience pay to ancient schools,
Bigots to Greece, and slaves to musty rules;
With solemn consequence declared that none
Could judge that cause but Sophocles alone.
Dupes to their fancied excellence, the crowd,
Obsequious to the sacred dictate, bow'd.
When, from amidst the throng, a youth stood forth,
Unknown his person, not unknown his worth;
His look bespoke applause; alone he stood,
Alone he stemm'd the mighty critic flood.
He talk'd of ancients, as the man became
Who prized our own, but envied not their fame;
With noble reverence spoke of Greece and Rome,
And scorn'd to tear the laurel from the tomb:—
"But more than just to other countries grown,
Must we turn base apostates to our own?
Where do these words of Greece and Rome excel,
That England may not please the ear as well?

What mighty magic 's in the place or air,
That all perfection needs must centre there?
In states, let strangers blindly be preferr'd;
In state of letters, merit should be heard.
Genius is of no country, her pure ray
Spreads all abroad, as general as the day;
Foe to restraint, from place to place she flies,
And may hereafter e'en in Holland rise.
May not (to give a pleasing fancy scope,
And cheer a patriot heart with patriot hope)
May not some great extensive Genius raise
The name of Britain 'bove Athenian praise;
And, whilst brave thirst of fame his bosom warms,
Make England great in letters as in arms?
There may—there hath—and Shakspeare's muse aspires
Beyond the reach of Greece: with native fires
Mounting aloft, he wings his daring flight,
Whilst Sophocles below stands trembling at his height.
"Why should we then abroad for judges roam,
When abler judges we may find at home?
Happy in tragic and in comic powers,
Have we not Shakspeare?—Is not Jonson ours?
For them, your natural judges, Britons, vote;
They'll judge like Britons, who like Britons wrote."
He said, and conquer'd—Sense resumed her sway,
And disappointed pedants stalk'd away.
Shakspeare and Jonson, with deserved applause,
Joint-judges were ordain'd to try the cause.
Meantime the stranger, every voice employ'd,
To ask or tell his name—Who is it?—LLOYD.
Thus, when the aged friends of Job stood mute,
And, tamely prudent, gave up the dispute,
Elihu, with the decent warmth of youth,
Boldly stood forth the advocate of truth;
Confuted falsehood, and disabled pride,
Whilst baffled age stood snarling at his side.

From The Rosciad.

THE PEASANT AND THE KING CONTRASTED.

The Villager, born humbly and bred hard,
Content his wealth, and Poverty his guard,
In action simply just, in conscience clear,
By guilt untainted, undisturb'd by fear,

His means but scanty, and his wants but few,
Labour his business and his pleasure too,
Enjoys more comforts in a single hour,
Than ages give the wretch condemn'd to power.
Call'd up by health, he rises with the day,
And goes to work as if he went to play,
Whistling off toils, one half of which might make
The stoutest Atlas of a palace quake;
'Gainst heat and cold, which make us cowards faint,
Harden'd by constant use, without complaint
He bears what we should think it death to bear;
Short are his meals, and homely is his fare;
His thirst he slakes at some pure neighb'ring brook,
Nor asks for sauce where appetite stands cook.
When the dews fall, and when the sun retires
Behind the mountains, when the village fires,
Which, waken'd all at once, speak supper nigh,
At distance catch and fix his longing eye,
Homeward he hies, and with his manly brood
Of raw-boned cubs enjoys that clean, coarse food,
Which, season'd with good-humour, his fond bride
'Gainst his return is happy to provide;
Then, free from care, and free from thought, he creeps
Into his straw, and till the morning sleeps.
Not so the King—With anxious cares oppress'd,
His bosom labours, and admits not rest.
A glorious wretch, he sweats beneath the weight
Of Majesty, and gives up ease for state.
E'en when his smiles, which, by the fools of pride,
Are treasured and preserved from side to side,
Fly round the court, e'en when, compell'd by form,
He seems most calm, his soul is in a storm!
Care, like a spectre, seen by him alone,
With all her nest of vipers, round his throne
By day crawls full in view; when Night bids Sleep,
Sweet nurse of Nature, o'er the senses creep,
When Misery herself no more complains,
And slaves, if possible, forget their chains,
Though his sense weakens, though his eyes grow dim,
That rest which comes to all, comes not to him.
E'en at that hour, Care, tyrant Care, forbids
The dew of sleep to fall upon his lids;
From night to night she watches at his bed;
Now, as one moped, sits brooding o'er his head;
Anon she starts, and, borne on raven's wings,
Croaks forth aloud—"Sleep was not made for Kings."

From Gotham: Book III.

THE TUTOR'S ADVICE.

A Tutor once, more read in men than books,
A kind of crafty knowledge in his looks,
Demurely sly, with high preferment blest,
His fav'rite pupil in these words address'd:
Would'st thou, my son, be wise and virtuous deem'd,
By all mankind a prodigy esteem'd?
Be this thy rule—be what men prudent call;
Prudence, almighty Prudence, gives thee all.
Keep up appearances, there lies the test,
The world will give thee credit for the rest.
Outward be fair, however foul within;
Sin if thou wilt, but then in secret sin.
This maxim 's into common favour grown—
Vice is no longer vice, unless 'tis known.
Virtue indeed may barefaced take the field;
But vice is virtue when 'tis well conceal'd.
Stay out all night, but take especial care
That Prudence bring thee back to early prayer:
As one with watching and with study faint,
Reel in a drunkard, and reel out a saint.
With joy the youth this useful lesson heard,
And in his memory stored each precious word;
Successfully pursued the plan, and now,
"Room for my Lord,—Virtue stand by and bow."

From Night.

PRIVILEGED IMPOSITION.

Faber, from day to day, from year to year,
Hath had the cries of tradesmen in his ear,
Of tradesmen by his villany betray'd,
And, vainly seeking justice, bankrupts made.
What is't to Faber? Lordly as before,
He sits at ease, and lives to ruin more.
Fix'd at his door, as motionless as stone,
Begging, but only begging for their own,
Unheard they stand, or only heard by those,
Those slaves in livery, who mock their woes.
What is't to Faber? He continues great,
Lives on in grandeur, and runs out in state.
The helpless widow, wrung with deep despair,
In bitterness of soul pours forth her prayer,
Hugging her starving babes with streaming eyes,
And calls down vengeance, vengeance from the skies.
What is't to Faber? He stands safe and clear,
Heav'n can commence no legal action here,

And on his breast a mighty plate he wears,
A plate more firm than triple brass, which bears
The name of Privilege 'gainst vulgar awe;
He feels no Conscience, and he fears no Law.

From The Times.

THE CITY POLITICIAN.

The Cit, a Common-Council-Man by place,
Ten thousand mighty nothings in his face,
By situation as by nature great,
With nice precision parcels out the state;
Proves and disproves, affirms, and then denies,
Objects himself, and to himself replies;
Wielding aloft the politician rod,
Makes Pitt by turns a devil and a god;
Maintains, e'en to the very teeth of power,
The same thing right and wrong in half an hour.
Now all is well, now he suspects a plot,
And plainly proves, WHATEVER IS, IS NOT.
Fearfully wise, he shakes his empty head,
And deals out empires as he deals out thread.
His useless scales are in a corner flung,
And Europe's balance hangs upon his tongue.

From Night.



This extraordinary man was born at Annan, in the county of Dumfries, North Britain, in 1721. Before he was six months old he had the misfortune to lose his sight by the small-pox; but as he grew up to boyhood, his father and friends endeavoured to lighten this calamity, by reading to him such books as were suitable to his age. In this manner he commenced his education, and acquired a thirst for further knowledge, which was amply gratified by those to whom he was endeared by his amiable disposition; and by their kind aid he not only obtained a thorough acquaintanceship with the English classical writers, but a competent knowledge of the Latin tongue. He also showed an early bias towards poetry, and composed several pieces, which were handed about as curiosities, from being the productions of one to whom the external world was "a universal blank." In consequence of this increasing notoriety, he was enabled to remove to Edinburgh in 1741, and attend the University classes; and having had his views directed to the church, he studied the usual course, and was licensed a preacher in 1759. On being ordained minister of the town and parish of Kirkcudbright, to which he had been presented by the Crown, the people naturally demurred at the idea of a blind pastor, so that, after some altercation, Blacklock consented to retire, on receiving a small annuity from the parish. He returned to Edinburgh, and opened an establishment to receive young gentlemen as boarders and pupils, in which useful situation he continued until the infirmities of old age obliged him to retire from active life. His death occurred on the 7th of July, 1791. Such were his classical and scientific attainments, that the Marischal College of Aberdeen, in 1767, conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. Independently of his personal merits, which obtained him the love and esteem of all who knew him, Dr. Blacklock will be always remembered with gratitude, as one of the earliest and best patrons of Burns.

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FROM A HYMN TO THE SUPREME BEING.

IN IMITATION OF THE 104TH PSALM.

When time shall in eternity be lost,
And hoary nature languish into dust;
For ever young thy glory shall remain,
Vast as thy being, endless as thy reign.
Thou, from the regions of eternal day,
View'st all thy works at one immense survey:
Pleased, thou behold'st the whole propensely tend
To perfect happiness, its glorious end.
If thou to earth but turn thy wrathful eyes,
Her basis trembles, and her offspring dies.
Thou smit'st the hills, and, at th' almighty blow,
Their summits kindle, and their inwards glow.
While this immortal spark of heavenly flame
Distends my breast, and animates my frame;
To thee my ardent praises shall be borne
On the first breeze that wakes the blushing morn:
The latest star shall hear the pleasing sound,
And nature in full choir shall join around.

When full of thee my soul excursive flies
Through air, earth, ocean, or thy regal skies;
From world to world, new wonders still I find,
And all the Godhead flashes on my mind.
When, wing'd with whirlwinds, Vice shall take its flight
To the deep bosom of eternal night,
To thee my soul shall endless praises pay:
Join, men and angels, join th' exalted lay!

THE AUTHOR'S PICTURE.

While in my matchless graces wrapt I stand,
And touch each feature with a trembling hand;
Deign, lovely self! with art and nature's pride,
To mix the colours, and the pencil guide.
Self is the grand pursuit of half mankind:
How vast a crowd by self, like me, are blind!
By self the fop, in magic colours shown,
Though scorn'd by every eye, delights his own.
When age and wrinkles seize the conqu'ring maid,
Self, not the glass, reflects the flattering shade.
Then, wonder-working self! begin the lay;
Thy charms to others as to me display.
Straight is my person, but of little size;
Lean are my cheeks, and hollow are my eyes:
My youthful down is, like my talents, rare;
Politely distant stands each single hair.
My voice too rough to charm a lady's ear;
So smooth, a child may listen without fear;
Not form'd in cadence soft and warbling lays
To soothe the fair through pleasure's wanton ways.
My form so fine, so regular, so new,
My port so manly, and so fresh my hue;
Oft, as I meet the crowd, they laughing say,
"See, see *Memento Mori* cross the way!"
The ravish'd Proserpine, at last, we know,
Grew fondly jealous of her sable beau;
But, thanks to nature! none from me need fly,
One heart the devil could wound—so cannot I.
Yet, though my person fearless may be seen,
There is some danger in my graceful mien:
For, as some vessel toss'd by wind and tide,
Bounds o'er the waves, and rocks from side to side;

In just vibration thus I always move:
This, who can view and not be forced to love?
Hail! charming self! by whose propitious aid
My form in all its glory stands display'd:
Be present still; with inspiration kind,
Let the same faithful colours paint the mind.
Like all mankind, with vanity I'm bless'd,
Conscious of wit I never yet possess'd.
To strong desires my heart, an easy prey,
Oft feels their force, but never owns their sway.
This hour, perhaps, as death I hate my foe;
The next I wonder why I should do so.
Though poor, the rich I view with careless eye;
Scorn a vain oath, and hate a serious lie.
I ne'er for satire torture common sense,
Nor show my wit at God's nor man's expense.
Harmless I live, unknowing and unknown;
Wish well to all, and yet do good to none.
Unmerited contempt I hate to bear;
Yet on my faults, like others, am severe.
Dishonest flames my bosom never fire;
The bad I pity, and the good admire:
Fond of the muse, to her devote my days,
And scribble—not for pudding, but for praise.
These careless lines if any virgin hears,
Perhaps, in pity to my joyless years,
She may consent a generous flame to own,
And I no longer sigh the nights alone.
But, should the fair, affected, vain, or nice,
Scream with the fears inspired by frogs or mice;
Cry, "Save us, Heaven! a spectre, not a man!"
Her hartshorn snatch, or interpose her fan:
If I my tender overture repeat,
O! may my vows her kind reception meet!
May she new graces on my form bestow,
And with tall honours dignify my brow!

TO A GENTLEMAN, WHO ASKED MY SENTIMENTS OF HIM.

AN EPIGRAM.

Dear Fabius! me if well you know,
You ne'er will take me for your foe;
If right yourself you comprehend,
You ne'er will take me for your friend.

This bold imitator of Homer was born in the parish of Dalmeny, in the county of West Lothian, North Britain, on the 5th of October, 1721. He was educated at the University of Edinburgh, where he associated with Robertson, Home, Adam Smith, and the other talented individuals who at that time adorned the Scottish capital. As his studies were directed to the church, he was licensed to preach, and after some years was ordained minister of Ratho, from which charge he was translated to the Professorship of Natural Philosophy, in the University of St. Andrew's. He died October 10, 1772. The misfortune of The Epigoniad, an epic which is now scarcely noticed, was the attempting to follow in the footsteps of Homer, which, with ninety-nine out of a hundred poets, was sure to end in a most miserable failure. Still, however, the work possesses some vigorous descriptions of high merit, and among these may be particularly mentioned the Death of Hercules.

FROM THE DEATH OF HERCULES.

Furious amidst the sacred fires he flew;
The victims scatter'd, and the hearths o'erthrew;
Then sinking prostrate, where a tide of gore
From oxen slain had blacken'd all the shore,
His form divine he roll'd in dust and blood;
His groans the hills re-echoed, and the flood.
Then rising furious, to the ocean's streams
He rush'd, in hope to quench his raging flames;
But burning still the unextinguish'd pain,
The shore he left, and stretch'd into the main.
A galley anchor'd near the beach we found;
Her curled canvas to the breeze unbound;
And traced his desperate course, till far before
We saw him land on Œta's desert shore:
Towards the skies his furious hands he rear'd,
And thus, across the deep, his voice we heard:—
Sovereign of Heaven and earth! whose boundless sway
The fates of men and mortal things obey!
If e'er delighted from the courts above,
In human form, you sought Alcmena's love;
If Fame's unchanging voice to all the earth,
With truth, proclaims you author of my birth;
Whence, from a course of spotless glory run,
Successful toils and wreaths of triumph won,
Am I thus wretched? better, that before
Some monster fierce had drunk my streaming gore;
Or crush'd by Cacus, foe to gods and men,
My batter'd brains had strew'd his rocky den;
Than, from my glorious toils and triumphs past,
To fall subdued by female arts at last.
O cool my boiling blood, ye winds, that blow

From mountains loaded with eternal snow,
And crack the icy cliffs; in vain! in vain!
Your rigour cannot quench my raging pain!
For round this heart the Furies wave their brands,
And wring my entrails with their burning hands.
Now bending from the skies, O wife of Jove!
Enjoy the vengeance of thy injured love:
For fate, by me, the thunderer's guilt atones;
And, punish'd in her son, Alcmena groans:
The object of your hate shall soon expire;
Fix'd on my shoulders preys a net of fire.
Whom nor the toils nor dangers could subdue,
By false Eurystheus dictated from you;
Nor tyrants lawless, nor the monstrous brood
Which haunts the desert or infests the flood;
Nor Greece, nor all the barb'rous climes that lie
Where Phœbus ever points his golden eye;
A woman hath o'erthrown! ye gods! I yield
To female arts, unconquer'd in the field.
My arms—alas! are these the same that bow'd
Anteus, and his giant force subdued?
That dragg'd Nemea's monster from his den;
And slew the dragon in his native fen?
Alas, alas! their mighty muscles fail,
While pains infernal every nerve assail:
Alas, alas! I feel in streams of woe
These eyes dissolved, before untaught to flow.
Awake, my virtue, oft in dangers tried,
Patient in toils, in deaths unterrified,
Rouse to my aid; nor let my labours past,
With fame achieved, be blotted by the last;
Firm and unmoved, the present shock endure;
Once triumph, and for ever rest secure.
The hero thus, and grasp'd a pointed rock
With both his arms, which straight in pieces broke,
Crush'd in his agony; then on his breast
Descending prostrate, further plaint suppress.
And now the clouds, in dusky volumes spread,
Had darken'd all the mountains with their shade:
The winds withhold their breath; the billows rest;
The sky's dark image on the deep imprest.
A bay for shelter opening in the strand,
We saw, and steer'd our vessel to the land.
Then mounting on the rocky beach above,
Through the thick gloom descried the son of Jove.
His head, declined between his hands, he lean'd;
His elbows on his bended knees sustain'd.

Above him still a hovering vapour flew,
Which, from his boiling veins, the garment drew.
Through the thick woof we saw the fumes aspire;
Like smoke of victims from the sacred fire.
Compassion's keenest touch my bosom thrill'd;
My eyes, a flood of melting sorrow fill'd:
Doubtful I stood: and, pondering in my mind,
By fear and pity variously inclined,
Whether to shun the hero, or essay,
With friendly words, his torment to allay:
When bursting from above, with hideous glare,
A flood of lightning kindled all the air.
From Œta's top it rush'd in sudden streams;
The ocean redden'd at its fiery beams.
Then, bellowing deep, the thunder's awful sound
Shook the firm mountains and the shores around.
Far to the east it roll'd, a length of sky;
We heard Eubœa's rattling cliffs reply,
As at his master's voice a swain appears,
When waked from sleep his early call he hears.
The hero rose; and to the mountain turn'd,
Whose cloud-involved top with lightning burn'd:
And thus his sire address'd: With patient mind,
Thy call I hear, obedient and resign'd;
Faithful and true the oracle! which spoke,
In high Dodona, from the sacred oak—
"That twenty years of painful labours past,
On Œta's top I should repose at last:"
Before, involved, the meaning lay conceal'd;
But now I find it in my fate reveal'd.
Thy sovereign will I blame not, which denies
With length of days to crown my victories:
Though still with danger and distress engaged,
For injured right eternal war I waged;
A life of pain, in barbarous climates led,
The heavens my canopy, a rock my bed:
More joy I've felt than delicacy knows,
Or all the pride of regal pomp bestows.
Dread sire! thy will I honour and revere,
And own thy love with gratitude sincere,
Which watch'd me in my toils, that none could boast
To raise a trophy from my glory lost:
And though at last, by female arts o'ercome,
And unsuspected fraud, I find my doom;
There to have fail'd, my honour ne'er can shake,
Where vice is only strong and virtue weak.

Epigoniad: Book VII.

Was born at Hull, in 1725. He was admitted of St. John's College, and afterwards of Pembroke College, Cambridge. In 1747, he published his Monody on the Death of Pope, and at a subsequent period his Isis. These, and other miscellaneous poems which he published, gave him a considerable poetical reputation, which was greatly enhanced by his Tragedy of Elfrida, that appeared in 1753. This work being modelled on the ancient Greek Drama, retained the Chorus, which was also the case with his Caractacus, that followed six years afterwards. The Chorus, as a component part of tragedy, is wholly inadmissible in modern dramatic representation; and yet, such was the poetical power and splendour with which Mason introduced it, that none, however bigotted, would wish that the glorious lyrics in his two dramas had remained unwritten. Besides these, he published Odes, Elegies, and a descriptive and didactic poem, in four books, called The Flower Garden. He also produced, with many additions and improvements, a translation of Du Fresnoy's Art of Painting. With a glowing imagination and fertile mind, Mason unfortunately affected a pomp of diction that, in too many cases, gave an artificial character to his sentiments, and stiffness to his versification. But still, the merits of his poetry rise superior to these defects, and sustain the cumbrousness of his language. His death occurred in 1797, and his worth and talents have been justly acknowledged in a tablet inscribed to his memory in Westminster Abbey.

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF LADY COVENTRY.

The midnight clock has toll'd; and hark, the bell
Of death beats slow! heard ye the note profound?
It pauses now; and now, with rising knell,
Flings to the hollow gale its sullen sound.

Yes, Coventry is dead. Attend the strain,
Daughters of Albion! ye that, light as air,
So oft have tript in her fantastic train,
With hearts as gay, and faces half as fair:

For she was fair beyond your brightest bloom;
(This envy owns, since now her bloom is fled;)
Fair as the forms, that, wove in fancy's loom,
Float in light vision round the poet's head.

Whene'er with soft serenity she smiled,
Or caught the orient blush of quick surprise,
How sweetly mutable, how brightly wild,
The liquid lustre darted from her eyes!

Each look, each motion, waked a new-born grace,
That o'er her form its transient glory cast:
Some lovelier wonder soon usurp'd the place,
Chased by a charm still lovelier than the last.

That bell again! it tells us what she is:
On what she was, no more the strain prolong;

Luxuriant fancy pause: an hour like this
Demands the tribute of a serious song.

Maria claims it from that sable bier,
Where cold and wan the slumberer rests her head;
In still small whispers to reflection's ear,
She breathes the solemn dictates of the dead.

Oh catch the awful notes, and lift them loud;
Proclaim the theme, by sage, by fool revered:
Hear it, ye young, ye vain, ye great, ye proud!
'Tis Nature speaks, and Nature will be heard.

Yes, ye shall hear, and tremble as ye hear,
While, high with health, your hearts exulting leap;
Ev'n in the midst of Pleasure's mad career,
The mental monitor shall wake and weep.

For say, than Coventry's propitious star,
What brighter planet on your births arose:
Or gave of Fortune's gifts an ampler share,
In life to lavish, or by death to lose!

Early to lose; while, borne on busy wing,
Ye sip the nectar of each varying bloom:
Nor fear, while basking in the beams of spring,
The wintry storm that sweeps you to the tomb.

Think of her fate! revere the heavenly hand
That led her hence, though soon, by steps so slow:
Long at her couch Death took his patient stand,
And menaced oft, and oft withheld the blow:

To give reflection time, with lenient art,
Each fond delusion from her soul to steal;
Teach her from folly peaceably to part,
And wean her from a world she loved so well.

Say, are ye sure his mercy shall extend
To you so long a span? Alas, ye sigh:
Make then, while yet ye may, your God your friend,
And learn with equal ease to sleep or die!

Nor think the Muse, whose sober voice ye hear,
Contracts with bigot frown her sullen brow;
Casts round Religion's orb the mists of fear,
Or shades with horrors what with smiles should glow.

No; she would warm you with seraphic fire,
Heirs as ye are of Heaven's eternal day;
Would bid you boldly to that Heaven aspire,
Not sink and slumber in your cells of clay.

Know, ye were form'd to range yon azure field;
In yon ethereal founts of bliss to lave:
Force then, secure in Faith's protecting shield,
The sting from Death, the victory from the Grave.

Is this the bigot's rant? Away, ye vain,
Your hopes, your fears, in doubt, in dulness, steep:
Go soothe your souls in sickness, grief, or pain,
With the sad solace of eternal sleep.

Yet will I praise you, triflers as ye are,
More than those preachers of your fav'rite creed,
Who proudly swell the brazen throat of war,
Who form the phalanx, bid the battle bleed;

Nor wish for more: who conquer, but to die.
Hear, Folly, hear, and triumph in the tale:
Like you, they reason; not, like you, enjoy
The breeze of bliss, that fills your silken sail.

On Pleasure's glittering stream ye gaily steer
Your little course to cold oblivion's shore;
They dare the storm, and, through th' inclement year,
Stem the rough surge, and brave the torrent's roar.

Is it for glory? That just Fate denies.
Long must the warrior moulder in his shroud,
Ere from her trump the heav'n-breathed accents rise,
That lift the hero from the fighting crowd.

Is it his grasp of empire to extend?
To curb the fury of insulting foes?
Ambition, cease; the idle contest end;
'Tis but a kingdom thou canst win or lose.

And why must murder'd myriads lose their all,
(If life be all;) why desolation lour,
With famish'd frown, on this affrighted ball,
That thou may'st flame the meteor of an hour?

Go, wiser ye, that flutter life away,
Crown with the mantling juice the goblet high;
Weave the light dance, with festive freedom gay,
And live your moment, since the next ye die.

Yet know, vain sceptics, know, th' Almighty mind,
Who breathed on man a portion of his fire,
Bade his free soul, by earth nor time confined
To Heaven, to immortality aspire.

Nor shall the pile of hope, his mercy rear'd,
By vain philosophy be e'er destroy'd:
Eternity, by all or wish'd or fear'd,
Shall be by all or suffer'd or enjoy'd.

This distinguished sailor-poet was born in Edinburgh, and as nearly as can be conjectured, about 1730. At an early age he was sent to sea, in a merchant-vessel of the town of Leith. In consequence of this, and the humble situation of his father, who was a barber, Falconer's education was extremely scanty; indeed, it appears, that what he learned was chiefly acquired from the instruction of Campbell, the author of Lexiphanes, to whom he was servant, and who, after The Shipwreck was published, used to boast, that the author of this admired work had been his pupil. Falconer, however, according to his own account, had never been taught beyond the elements of reading, writing, and a little arithmetic, to which he afterwards added, in the course of his voyages, a slight knowledge of French, Spanish, and Italian. After having been for some time employed as a sea-boy, he served on board the Britannia, a merchant-ship, in the capacity of second mate. This vessel was wrecked off Cape Colonna, in her course homeward from Alexandria, and all on board perished except himself and two sailors. An event of such common occurrence would have been forgotten in a day or two, but for that high-minded and inspired youth, who, after sharing in all the miseries of the shipwreck, had survived to record them; and the loss of the Britannia was to call forth those tears that were withheld from the ruin of whole armadas. The poem was published in 1762, and the public was both delighted and surprised at the novelty of the theme, and the admirable skill with which it had been handled. Storms indeed had been produced in plenty by the poets of every age and country; but all of them, without even excepting that of Virgil, savoured too much of the land and the fireside, to be either natural or agreeable; they seemed to have been coolly brewed according to the well-known receipt of Dean Swift. But it was perceived at once, that The Shipwreck was a production of a very different stamp. The author had seen and felt what he described; his delineations were those of a skilful seaman, as well as a poet of no ordinary power; and while he recorded the event in the language of a sailor, the technicalities with which the poem necessarily abounded, instead of darkening, only served to make the subject more perspicuous to the capacities of landsmen. Independently of these circumstances, the admirable manner in which different parts of the shores of Greece were introduced, and the historical allusions which they suggested, imparted to such a common-place event as the wrecking of a merchant vessel, all the richness of a classical poem.

As Falconer had dedicated his poem to the Duke of York, the favour of His Royal Highness obtained for the poet the appointment of midshipman in the royal navy, and afterwards the more lucrative one of purser. Falconer then married Miss Hicks, an amiable and accomplished lady; but the unexpected peace of 1763, threatened to reduce him to his original poverty. When his ship, however, was laid up in ordinary at Chatham, the cabin was fitted up, through the favour of Commissioner Hanway, as a residence for the unfortunate purser. After staying here for some time, he removed to London, where he encountered considerable difficulties, and published his Marine Dictionary, a work which was highly prized at the time, as an excellent text-book on nautical matters. The late Mr. Murray, the bookseller, was at that period establishing himself in business, and he solicited Falconer to become his partner; but the latter, who had already been appointed purser to the Aurora, East Indiaman, resolved once more to tempt that element, with the dangers of which he was so conversant. The Aurora set sail for India in 1769, but after she had passed the Cape of Good Hope, she was never heard of, and it was supposed that she must have foundered at sea, and gone down with all on board.

Besides The Shipwreck, Falconer attempted political poetry in the form of two panegyrics, one on the Prince of Wales, and the other on the Duke of York; and an unfinished production called The Demagogue, in which he endeavoured to enter the lists against Churchill. But his muse had been cradled in a ship, and nursed amidst the elements, so that the sea had become her home, and Falconer soon showed that he was unfitted for the land-service of politics. No one therefore cares to remember, that he ever penned a stanza beyond that which closed the catastrophe at Cape Colonna.

FALCONER.

FROM THE SHIPWRECK.

Th' ethereal dome, in mournful pomp array'd,
Now lurks behind impenetrable shade;
Now, flashing round intolerable light,
Redoubles all the terrors of the night.
Such terrors Sinai's quaking hill o'erspread,
When Heaven's loud trumpet sounded o'er its head.
It seem'd, the wrathful angel of the wind
Had all the horrors of the skies combined;
And here, to one ill-fated ship opposed,
At once the dreadful magazine disclosed.
And lo! tremendous o'er the deep he springs,
Th' inflaming sulphur flashing from his wings!—
Hark! his strong voice the dismal silence breaks:
Mad Chaos from the chains of death awakes!
Loud and more loud the rolling peals enlarge;
And blue on deck their blazing sides discharge;
There, all aghast, the shivering wretches stood;
While chill suspense and fear congeal'd their blood.
Now in a deluge burst the living flame,
And dread concussion rends th' ethereal frame.
Sick Earth, convulsive, groans from shore to shore,
And Nature, shuddering, feels the horrid roar.
  Still the sad prospect rises on my sight,
Reveal'd in all its mournful shade and light.
Swift through my pulses glides the kindling fire,
As lightning glances on th' electric wire.
But ah! the force of numbers strives in vain,
The glowing scene unequal to sustain.
  But lo! at last, from tenfold darkness born,
Forth issues o'er the wave the weeping morn.
Hail, sacred vision! who, on orient wings,
The cheering dawn of light propitious brings!
All nature smiling hail'd the vivid ray,
That gave her beauties to returning day:
All but our ship, that, groaning on the tide,
No kind relief, no gleam of hope, descried.
For now, in front, her trembling inmates see
The hills of Greece emerging on the lee.

So the lost lover views that fatal morn,
On which, for ever from his bosom torn,
The nymph adored resigns her blooming charms,
To bless with love some happier rival's arms.
So to Eliza dawn'd that cruel day,
That tore Æneas from her arms away;
That saw him parting, never to return,
Herself in funeral flames decreed to burn.
O yet in clouds, thou genial source of light,
Conceal thy radiant glories from our sight!
Go, with thy smile adorn the happy plain,
And gild the scenes where health and pleasure reign
But let not here, in scorn, thy wanton beam
Insult the dreadful grandeur of my theme!
While shoreward now the bounding vessel flies,
Full in her van St. George's cliffs arise:
High o'er the rest a pointed crag is seen,
That hung projecting o'er a mossy green.
Nearer and nearer now the danger grows,
And all their skill relentless fates oppose.
For, while more eastward they direct the prow,
Enormous waves the quivering deck o'erflow.
While, as she wheels, unable to subdue
Her sallies, still they dread her broaching-to.
Alarming thought! for now no more a-lee
Her riven side could bear th' invading sea;
And if the following surge she scuds before,
Headlong she runs upon the dreadful shore;
A shore where shelves and hidden rocks abound
Where death in secret ambush lurks around.—
Far less dismay'd, Anchises' wandering son
Was seen the straits of Sicily to shun:
When Palinurus, from the helm, descried
The rocks of Scylla on his eastern side;
While in the west, with hideous yawn disclosed,
His onward path Charybdis' gulf opposed;
The double danger as by turns he view'd,
His wheeling bark her arduous track pursued.
Thus, while to right and left destruction lies,
Between th' extremes the daring vessel flies.
With boundless involution, bursting o'er
The marble cliffs, loud-dashing surges roar.
Hoarse through each winding creek the tempest raves
And hollow rocks repeat the groan of waves.
Destruction round th' insatiate coast prepares,
To crush the trembling ship, unnumber'd snares.
But haply now she 'scapes the fatal strand,

Though scarce ten fathoms distant from the land.
Swift as the weapon issuing from the bow,
She cleaves the burning waters with her prow;
And forward leaping, with tumultuous haste,
As on the tempest's wing, the isle she past.
With longing eyes, and agony of mind,
The sailors view this refuge left behind;
Happy to bribe, with India's richest ore,
A safe accession to that barren shore!
When in the dark Peruvian mine confined,
Lost to the cheerful commerce of mankind,
The groaning captive wastes his life away,
For ever exiled from the realms of day;
Not equal pangs his bosom agonize,
When far above the sacred light he eyes,
While, all forlorn, the victim pines in vain,
For scenes he never shall possess again.
But now Athenian mountains they descry,
And o'er the surge Colonna frowns on high.
Beside the cape's projecting verge is placed
A range of columns, long by time defaced;
First planted by devotion to sustain,
In elder times, Tritonia's sacred fane.
Foams the wild beach below with madd'ning rage,
Where waves and rocks a dreadful combat wage.
The sickly heaven, fermenting with its freight,
Still vomits o'er the main the feverish weight:
And now, while wing'd with ruin from on high,
Through the rent cloud the ragged lightnings fly,
A flash, quick-glancing on the nerves of light,
Struck the pale helmsman with eternal night:
Rodmond, who heard a piteous groan behind,
Touch'd with compassion gazed upon the blind;
And, while around his sad companions crowd,
He guides th' unhappy victim to the shroud.
Hie thee aloft, my gallant friend! he cries;
Thy only succour on the mast relies!—
The helm, bereft of half its vital force,
Now scarce subdued the wild unbridled course:
Quick to th' abandon'd wheel Arion came,
The ship's tempestuous sallies to reclaim.
Amazed he saw her, o'er the sounding foam
Upborne, to right and left distracted roam.
So gazed young Phaeton, with pale dismay,
When mounted on the flaming car of day,
With rash and impious hand the stripling tried
Th' immortal coursers of the sun to guide.—

The vessel, while the dread event draws nigh,
Seems more impatient o'er the waves to fly:
Fate spurs her on.—Thus, issuing from afar,
Advances to the sun some blazing star;
And, as it feels th' attraction's kindling force,
Springs onward with accelerated course.
With mournful look the seamen eyed the strand,
Where death's inexorable jaws expand:
Swift from their minds elapsed all dangers past,
As, dumb with terror, they beheld the last.
Now on the trembling shrouds, before, behind,
In mute suspense they mount into the wind.—
The Genius of the deep, on rapid wing,
The black eventful moment seem'd to bring.
The fatal Sisters, on the surge before,
Yoked their infernal horses to the prore.—
The steersmen now received their last command
To wheel the vessel sidelong to the strand.
Twelve sailors, on the foremast who depend,
High on the platform of the top ascend;
Fatal retreat! for while the plunging prow
Immerges headlong in the wave below,
Down-prest by watery weight the bowsprit bends,
And from above the stem deep crashing rends.
Beneath her beak the floating ruins lie;
The foremast totters, unsustain'd on high:
And now the ship, fore-lifted by the sea,
Hurls the tall fabric backward o'er her lee;
While, in the general wreck, the faithful stay
Drags the main-topmast from its post away.
Flung from the mast, the seamen strive in vain
Through hostile floods their vessel to regain.
The waves they buffet, till, bereft of strength,
O'erpower'd they yield to cruel fate at length.
The hostile waters close around their head,
They sink for ever, number'd with the dead!
Those who remain their fearful doom await,
Nor longer mourn their lost companions' fate.
The heart that bleeds with sorrows all its own,
Forgets the pangs of friendship to bemoan.—
Albert and Rodmond and Palemon here,
With young Arion, on the mast appear;
Even they, amid th' unspeakable distress,
In every look distracting thoughts confess;
In every vein the refluent blood congeals,
And every bosom fatal terror feels.
Enclosed with all the demons of the main,

They view'd th' adjacent shore, but view'd in vain.
Such torments in the drear abodes of hell,
Where sad despair laments with rueful yell,
Such torments agonize the damned breast,
While fancy views the mansions of the blest.
For Heaven's sweet help their suppliant cries implore;
But Heaven, relentless, deigns to help no more!
And now, lash'd on by destiny severe,
With horror fraught, the dreadful scene drew near!
The ship hangs hovering on the verge of death,
Hell yawns, rocks rise, and breakers roar beneath!—
In vain, alas! the sacred shades of yore
Would arm the mind with philosophic lore;
In vain they'd teach us, at the latest breath,
To smile serene amid the pangs of death:
E'en Zeno's self, and Epictetus old,
This fell abyss had shudder'd to behold:
Had Socrates, for godlike virtue famed,
And wisest of the sons of men proclaim'd,
Beheld this scene of frenzy and distress,
His soul had trembled to its last recess!—
O yet confirm my heart, ye powers above,
This last tremendous shock of fate to prove.
The tottering frame of reason yet sustain!
Nor let this total ruin whirl my brain!
In vain the cords and axes were prepared,
For now th' audacious seas insult the yard;
High o'er the ship they throw a horrid shade,
And o'er her burst, in terrible cascade.
Uplifted on the surge, to heaven she flies,
Her shatter'd top half buried in the skies,
Then headlong plunging thunders on the ground,
Earth groans! air trembles! and the deeps resound!
Her giant bulk the dread concussion feels,
And quivering with the wound, in torment, reels.
So reels, convulsed with agonizing throes,
The bleeding bull beneath the murd'rer's blows.—
Again she plunges! hark! a second shock
Tears her strong bottom on the marble rock!
Down on the vale of death, with dismal cries,
The fated victims shuddering roll their eyes
In wild despair; while yet another stroke,
With deep convulsion, rends the solid oak:
Till like the mine, in whose infernal cell
The lurking demons of destruction dwell,
At length asunder torn her frame divides,
And crashing spreads in ruin o'er the tides.

Was born at Kirkby-Steven, in Westmoreland, in March, 1735. As his means were too limited for a University education, he acquired his classical knowledge, in which he made a respectable proficiency, at private schools. Having taken orders, he was several years a curate, until 1767, when, having married a lady of some fortune, he was appointed to the living of Blagdon, in Somersetshire. The works of Langhorne, both in prose and verse, are numerous. His poem on the death of his wife, whom he had courted for many years with a romantic attachment, and who died in child-birth of a son, is the happiest specimen of his poetical powers. His own death occurred, April 1, 1779.

VERSES IN MEMORY OF A LADY.

Let others boast the false and faithless pride,
No nuptial charm to know, or, known, to hide,
With vain disguise from Nature's dictates part,
For the poor triumph of a vacant heart;
My verse, the God of tender vows inspires,
Dwells on my soul, and wakens all her fires.

Dear, silent partner of those happier hours,
That pass'd in Hackthorn's vales, in Blagdon's bowers!
If yet thy gentle spirit wanders here,
Borne by its virtues to no nobler sphere;
If yet that pity which, of life possest,
Fill'd thy fair eye, and lighten'd through thy breast;
If yet that tender thought, that generous care,
The gloomy power of endless night may spare;
Oh! while my soul for thee, for thee complains,
Catch her warm sighs, and kiss her bleeding strains.

Wild, wretched wish! can prayer, with feeble breath,
Pierce the pale ear, the statued ear of death?
Let patience pray, let hope aspire to prayer,
And leave me the strong language of despair!

Hence, ye vain painters of ingenious woe,
Ye Lytteltons, ye shining Petrarchs, go!
I hate the languor of your lenient strain,
Your flowery grief, your impotence of pain.
Oh! had ye known, what I have known, to prove
The searching flame, the agonies of love!
Oh! had ye known how souls to souls impart
Their fire, or mix'd the life-drops of the heart!
Not like the streams that down the mountain's side,
Tunefully mourn, and sparkle as they glide;
Not like the breeze, that sighs at evening hour
On the soft bosom of some folding flower;

Your stronger grief, in stronger accents borne,
Had soothed the breast with burning anguish torn.

The voice of seas, the winds that rouse the deep,
Far-sounding floods that tear the mountains steep;
Each wild and melancholy blast that raves
Round these dim towers, and smites the beating waves—
This soothes my soul—'Tis Nature's mournful breath,
'Tis Nature struggling in the arms of death!

See, the last aid of her expiring state,
See love, even love, has lent his darts to fate!
Oh! when beneath his golden shafts I bled,
And vainly bound his trophies on my head;
When, crown'd with flowers, he led the rosy day,
Lived to my eye, and drew my soul away—
Could fear, could fancy, at that tender hour,
See the dim grave demand the nuptial flower?

There, there his wreaths dejected Hymen strew'd;
And mourn'd their bloom unfaded as he view'd.
There each fair hope, each tenderness of life,
Each nameless charm of soft obliging strife,
Delight, love, fancy, pleasure, genius, fled,
And the best passions of my soul lie dead;
All, all is there in cold oblivion laid,
But pale Remembrance bending o'er a shade.

O come, ye softer sorrows, to my breast!
Ye lenient sighs, that slumber into rest!
Come, soothing dreams, your friendly pinions wave,
We 'll bear the fresh rose to yon honour'd grave;
For once this pain, this frantic pain, forego,
And feel at last the luxury of woe!

Ye holy sufferers, that in silence wait
The last sad refuge of relieving fate!
That rest at eve beneath the cypress' gloom,
And sleep familiar on your future tomb;
With you I 'll waste the slow-departing day,
And wear, with you, th' uncolour'd hours away.

Oh lead me to your cells, your lonely aisles,
Where Resignation folds her arms, and smiles;
Where holy Faith unwearied vigils keeps,
And guards the urn where fair Constantia sleeps;
There, let me there, in sweet oblivion lie,
And calmly feel the tutor'd passions die.

TO A REDBREAST.

Little bird, with bosom red,
Welcome to my humble shed!
Courtly domes of high degree
Have no room for thee and me.
Pride and pleasure's fickle throng
Nothing mind an idle song.

Daily near my table steal,
While I pick my scanty meal.
Doubt not, little though there be,
But I'll cast a crumb to thee;
Well rewarded, if I spy
Pleasure in thy glancing eye;
See thee, when thou'st ate thy fill,
Plume thy breast, and wipe thy bill.

Come, my feather'd friend, again
Well thou know'st the broken pane.
Ask of me thy daily store:
Go not near Avaro's door:
Once within his iron hall,
Woful end shall thee befall.
Savage!—he would soon divest
Of its rosy plumes thy breast;
Then, with solitary joy,
Eat thee, bones and all, my boy!

THE GIPSEY-LIFE.

The Gipsy-race my pity rarely move;
Yet their strong thirst of liberty I love:
Not Wilkes, our freedom's holy martyr, more;
Nor his firm phalanx, of the common shore.

For this in Norwood's patrimonial groves,
The tawny father with his offspring roves;
When summer suns lead slow the sultry day,
In mossy caves, where welling waters play,
Fann'd by each gale that cools the fervid sky,
With this in ragged luxury they lie.
Oft at the sun the dusky Elfins strain
The sable eye, then, snugging, sleep again;
Oft, as the dews of cooler evening fall,
For their prophetic mother's mantle call.

From The Country Justice

THE learned author of the History of English Poetry was born at Basingstoke, in 1728, and of a family remarkable for talent, for his father and brother were eminent as poets and critics,—thus composing a triumvirate such as no other name can boast. Thomas was educated at Trinity College, and acquired distinction at an early period by the superiority of his poetical productions. In 1745, he published five pastoral eclogues. On the publication of Mason's Isis, which reflected severely upon the loyalty of Oxford, Warton stood forth as the champion of his *Alma Mater*, and, in 1749, published a poetical reply, entitled, The Triumph of Isis, which Mason himself acknowledged to be superior to his own production. In 1757, he was elected to the Professorship of Poetry in Pembroke College,—an office which he discharged with remarkable ability and success; and in 1785, the laurel was conferred upon him, at the express desire of his Majesty, on the death of Whitehead. After an active literary life, in which he raised, by his History of English Poetry and his Dissertations, the critical taste of the age to a higher point than had ever been attained, he died on the 21st of May, 1790.

THE PLEASURES OF MELANCHOLY.

Beneath yon ruin'd abbey's moss-grown piles
Oft let me sit at twilight hour of eve,
Where, through some western window, the pale moon
Pours her long-levell'd rule of streaming light;
While sullen sacred silence reigns around,
Save the lone screech-owl's note, which builds his bow'r
Amid the mould'ring caverns dark and damp,
Or the calm breeze, that rustles in the leaves
Of flaunting ivy, that with mantle green
Invests some wasted tower. Or led me tread
Its neighb'ring walk of pines, where mused of old
The cloister'd brothers: through the gloomy void
That far extends beneath their ample arch
As on I pace, religious horror wraps
My soul in dread repose. But when the world
Is clad in midnight's raven-colour'd robe,
'Mid hollow charnel let me watch the flame
Of taper dim, shedding a livid glare
O'er the wan heaps; while airy voices talk
Along the glimmering walls; or ghostly shape
At distance seen, invites with beckoning hand
My lonesome steps, through the far-winding vaults.
Nor undelightful is the solemn noon
Of night, when haply wakeful from my couch
I start: lo, all is motionless around!
Roars not the rushing wind; the sons of men
And every beast in mute oblivion lie;
All nature's hush'd in silence and in sleep.

O, then, how fearful is it to reflect,
That, through the still globe's awful solitude,
No being wakes but me! till stealing sleep
My drooping temples bathes in opiate dews.
Nor then let dreams, of wanton folly born,
My senses lead through flowery paths of joy;
But let the sacred genius of the night
Such mystic visions send, as Spenser saw,
When through bewild'ring fancy's magic maze,
To the fell house of Busyrane, he led
Th' unshaken Britomart; or Milton knew,
When in abstracted thought he first conceived
All heaven in tumult, and the seraphim
Came towering, arm'd in adamant and gold.

EVENING.

Oft when thy season, sweetest queen,
Has drest the groves in livery green;
When in each fair and fertile field
Beauty begins her bower to build;
While evening, veil d in shadows brown,
Puts her matron-mantle on,
And mists in spreading steams convey
More fresh the fumes of new-shorn hay;
Then, goddess, guide my pilgrim feet
Contemplation hoar to meet,
As slow he winds in museful mood,
Near the rush'd marge of Cherwell's flood;
Or o'er old Avon's magic edge,
Whence Shakspeare cull'd the spiky sedge,
All playful, yet in years unripe,
To frame a shrill and simple pipe.
There through the dusk, but dimly seen,
Sweet evening objects intervene:
His wattled cotes the shepherd plants;
Beneath her elm the milk-maid chants;
The woodman, speeding home, a while
Rests him at a shady style.
Nor wants there fragrance to dispense
Refreshment o'er my soothed sense;
Nor tangled woodbine's balmy bloom,
Nor grass besprent to breathe perfume;
Nor lurking wild-thyme's spicy sweet
To bathe in dew my roving feet:

Nor wants there note of Philomel,
Nor sound of distant-tinkling bell;
Nor lowings faint of herds remote,
Nor mastiff's bark from bosom'd cot;
Rustle the breezes lightly borne
O'er deep embattled ears of corn:
Round ancient elm, with humming noise,
Full loud the chaffer-swarms rejoice.
Meantime, a thousand dyes invest
The ruby chambers of the West,
That all aslant the village tower
A mild reflected radiance pour,
While, with the level-streaming rays
Far seen its arched windows blaze;
And the tall grove's green top is dight
In russet tints, and gleams of light:
So that the gay scene by degrees
Bathes my blithe heart in ecstacies;
And fancy to my ravish'd sight
Portrays her kindred visions bright.

From an Ode on the Approach of Summer.

JOCKEY SENATORS.

Meantime, no more the mimic patriots rise,
To guard Britannia's honour, warm and wise:
No more in senates dare assert her laws,
Nor pour the bold debate in freedom's cause:
Neglect the counsels of a sinking land,
And know no rostrum, but Newmarket's stand.
Is this the band of civil chiefs design'd
On England's weal to fix the pondering mind;
Who, while their country's rights are set to sale,
Quit Europe's balance for the jockey's scale?
O say, when least their sapient schemes are crost,
Or when a nation, or a match, is lost?
Who dams and sires with more exactness trace,
Than of their country's kings the sacred race:
Think London journeys are the worst of ills;
Subscribe to articles, instead of bills:
Strangers to all our annalists relate,
Theirs are the memoirs of th' equestrian state:
Who lost to Albion's past and present views,
Heber, thy chronicles alone peruse.

*

Go on, brave youths, till in some future age,
Whips shall become the senatorial badge;
Till England see her thronging senators
Meet all at Westminster, in boots and spurs;
See the whole House, with mutual frenzy mad,
Her patriots all in leathern breeches clad:
Of bets, not taxes, learnedly debate,
And guide with equal reins a steed or state.
How would a virtuous Houhnhym neigh disdain,
To see his brethren brook th' imperious rein;
Bear slavery's wanton whip, or galling goad,
Smoke through the glebe, or trace the destined road;
And robb'd of manhood by the murderous knife,
Sustain each sordid toil of servile life.
Yet oh! what rage would touch his generous mind,
To see his sons of more than human kind;
A kind, with each exalted virtue blest,
Each gentler feeling of the liberal breast,
Afford diversion to that monster base,
That meanest spawn of man's half-monkey race,
In whom pride, avarice, ignorance, conspire,
That hated animal—a Yahoo squire.

From Newmarket. A Satire.



Was born at Langholm, in Dumfries, on the 29th of September, 1734, and received his education at the Grammar School of his native town, and afterwards at the High School of Edinburgh. He was early distinguished by his love of literature and attachment to poetry, but was obliged, contrary to his wish, to embark in business, in which he was unsuccessful, and involved in serious difficulties. In consequence of this, he resumed his pen, and published a poem On Providence, in 1762. He afterwards repaired to London, in the hope of finding subsistence by his pen; but he was doomed to linger in poverty and disappointment until 1765, when he was appointed corrector of the Clarendon Press, at Oxford. He now continued to write occasional pieces, until his greatest work, the translation of the Lusiad of Camoens, appeared in 1775. Four years after, he was appointed Secretary to the Romney man-of-war, a lucrative situation, that enabled him to discharge all his debts, as well as to be independent of further difficulties. He died on the 28th of October, 1788. The fame of Mickle as a poet rests not so much on his original productions, as his version of the Lusiad, one of the finest translations in the English language.

SACRED TO THE HEIRS OF RADNOR CASTLE.

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SACRED TO THE HEIRS OF RADNOR CASTLE.

O thou whose hopes these fair domains inspire,
The awful lesson here bestow'd attend;
With pensive eve here let thy steps retire,
What time rapt fancy's shadowy forms descend

Hark! from yon hall as headlong waste purveys,
What Bacchanalian revels loud resound,
With festive fires the midnight windows blaze,
And fever'd tumult reels his giddy round.

'Tis past,—the mansion owns another lord,
The ousted heir so riotous erewhile,
Now sits a suppliant at his wonted board,
Insulted by the base-born menial's smile.

By the base menials taunted from the door,
With anguish'd heart resistless of his woe,
Forlorn he strays those lawns, his own no more,
Unknowing where, on trembling knees and slow:

Till here, beneath an aged elm's bleak shade,
Fainting he sinks—Ah! let thy mind descry,
On the cold turf how low his humbled head,
On yon fair dome how fix'd his ghastly eye!

By his mad revels, by his last heart sigh,
O thou of these proud towers the promised heir,
By every manly virtue's holy tie,
By honour's fairest bloom, O fortune's child, beware!

STANZAS.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY STUDIOUS OF BOTANY.

Say, gentle lady of the bower,
For thou, though young, art wise,
And known to thee is every flower
Beneath our milder skies:

Say, which the plant of modest dye,
And lovely mien combined,
That fittest to the pensive eye
Displays the virtuous mind.

I sought the groves where Innocence
Methought might long reside;
But April's blossoms banish'd thence,
Gave summer, Flora's pride.

I sought the garden's boasted haunt,
But on the gay parterre
Carnations glow, and tulips flaunt—
No humble floweret there.

The flower you seek, the nymph replies,
Has bow'd the languid head;
For on its bloom the blazing skies
Their sultry rage have shed.

'Tis now the downward withering day
Of winter's dull presage,
That seeks not where the dog-star's ray
Has shed his fiercest rage.

Yet search yon shade, obscure, forlorn,
Where rude the bramble grows;
There, shaded by the humble thorn,
The lingering primrose blows.

DOWNFALL OF THE PORTUGUESE EMPIRE IN INDIA.

Broad was the firm-based structure and sublime,
That Gama fondly rear'd on India's clime:
On justice and benevolence he placed
Its ponderous weight, and warlike trophies graced
Its mounting turrets; and o'er Asia wide
Great Albuquerk renown'd its generous pride.
Others, without his valour or his art,
With all his interested rage of heart,
Follow'd, as blighting mists on Gama's toil,
And undermined and rent the mighty pile;
Convulsions dread its deep foundations tore,
Its bending head the scath of lightning bore:
Its falling turrets desolation spread;
And from its faithless shade in horror fled
The native tribes—yet not at once subdued;
Its pristine strength long storms on storms withstood;
A Nunio's justice, and a Castro's sword,
Oft raised its turrets, and its dread restored.
Yet, like the sunshine of a winter day
On Norway's coast, soon died the transient ray.
A tyrant race who own'd no country came,
Deep to entrench themselves, their only aim;
With lust of rapine fever'd and athirst,
With the unhallow'd rage of game accurst;
Against each spring of action, on the breast
For wisest ends by Nature's hand imprest,
Stern war they waged; and blindly ween'd alone
On brutal dread to fix their cruel throne.
The wise and good, with indignation fired,
Silent from their unhallow'd board retired;
The base and cunning stay'd, and slaves avow'd
Submiss to every insult smiling bow'd.
Yet while they smiled, and bow'd the abject head,
In chains unfelt their tyrant lords they led;
Their avarice, watching as a bird of prey,
O'er every weakness, o'er each vice, held sway;
Till secret art assumed the thwarting face,
And dictate bold; and ruin and disgrace
Closed th' unworthy scene. Now trampled low
Beneath the injured native, and the foe
From Belgia lured by India's costly prey,
Thy glorious structure, Gama, prostrate lay,
And lies in desolated awful gloom,
Dread and instructive as a ruin'd tomb.

From Almada Hill.

Was born at Soutra, in the county of Mid Lothian, North Britain, in 1748, and after being educated for the church, at the College of Edinburgh, he was appointed minister of South Leith, where he was distinguished as an eloquent divine of the first order. In 1781, appeared a collection of his Poems, and in 1783 his Runnymede, which obtained for their author a distinguished poetical celebrity. In consequence, however, of having fallen into a baneful habit, incompatible with his sacred profession, his people obliged him to resign his church, upon which he repaired to London in 1785, and became a literary and periodical writer till his death, which took place on the 9th of December, 1788. The poems of Logan, without exhibiting any high flights of fancy, are distinguished by a tenderness of feeling and sweetness of versification, that have always made them popular, especially in Scotland, where several of them exist among the hymns of the national church.

DESCRIPTION OF SPRING.

No longer hoary winter reigns,
No longer binds the streams in chains,
  Or heaps with snow the meads;
Array'd with robe of rainbow dye,
At last the Spring appears on high,
And, smiling over earth and sky,
  Her new creation leads.

The snows confess a warmer ray,
The loosen'd streamlet loves to stray,
  And echo down the dale;
The hills uplift their summits green,
The vales more verdant spread between,
The cuckoo in the wood unseen
  Coos ceaseless to the gale.

The rainbow arching woos the eye
With all the colours of the sky,
  With all the pride of Spring;
Now Heaven descends in sunny showers,
The sudden fields put on the flowers,
The green leaves wave upon the bowers,
  And birds begin to sing.

The cattle wander in the wood,
And find the wonted verdant food,
  Beside the well-known rills;
Blithe in the sun the shepherd swain
Like Pan attunes the pastoral strain,
While many echoes send again
  The music of the hills.

At eve, the primrose path along,
The milkmaid shortens with a song
  Her solitary way;
She sees the fairies, with their queen,
Trip hand-in-hand the circled green,
And hears them raise at times, unseen,
  The ear-enchanting lay.

Maria, come! Now let us rove,
Now gather garlands in the grove,
  Of every new-sprung flower:
We'll hear the warblings of the wood,
We'll trace the windings of the flood;
O come, thou fairer than the bud
  Unfolding in a shower!

HYMN.

Where high the heavenly temple stands,
The house of God not made with hands,
A great high priest our nature wears,
The patron of mankind appears.

He who for men in mercy stood,
And pour'd on earth his precious blood,
Pursues in Heaven his plan of grace,
The guardian God of human race.

Though now ascended up on high,
He bends on earth a brother's eye;
Partaker of the human name,
He knows the frailty of our frame.

Our fellow-sufferer yet retains
A fellow-feeling of our pains;
And still remembers in the skies
His tears, and agonies, and cries.

In every pang that rends the heart,
The Man of Sorrows had a part;
He sympathises in our grief,
And to the sufferer sends relief.

With boldness, therefore, at the throne
Let us make all our sorrows known,
And ask the aids of heavenly power,
To help us in the evil hour.

ODE TO THE CUCKOO.

Hail, beauteous stranger of the grove,
  Thou messenger of Spring!
Now Heaven repairs thy rural seat,
  And woods thy welcome sing.

What time the daisy decks the green,
  Thy certain voice we hear;
Hast thou a star to guide thy path,
  Or mark the rolling year?

Delightful visitant! with thee
  I hail the time of flowers,
And hear the sound of music sweet
  From birds among the bowers.

The schoolboy, wandering through the wood,
  To pull the primrose gay,
Starts, the new voice of Spring to hear,
  And imitates thy lay.

What time the pea puts on the bloom
  Thou fliest thy vocal vale,
An annual guest in other lands,
  Another Spring to hail.

Sweet bird! thy bower is ever green,
  Thy sky is ever clear;
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
  No winter in thy year.

O could I fly, I'd fly with thee!
  We'd make, with joyful wing,
Our annual visit o'er the globe,
  Companions of the Spring.

SONG.—THE BRAES OF YARROW.

"Thy braes were bonny, Yarrow stream!
  When first on them I met my lover;
Thy braes how dreary, Yarrow stream,
  When now thy waves his body cover!

For ever now, O Yarrow stream!
Thou art to me a stream of sorrow;
For never on thy banks shall I
Behold my love, the flower of Yarrow.

"He promised me a milk-white steed,
To bear me to his father's bowers;
He promised me a little page,
To 'squire me to his father's towers;
He promised me a wedding-ring,—
The wedding-day was fix'd to-morrow;—
Now he is wedded to his grave,
Alas, his watery grave in Yarrow!

"Sweet were his words, when last we met;
My passion I as freely told him:
Clasp'd in his arms, I little thought
That I should never more behold him!
Scarce was he gone, I saw his ghost;
It vanish'd with a shriek of sorrow;
Thrice did the water-wraith ascend,
And gave a doleful groan through Yarrow

"His mother from the window look'd,
With all the longing of a mother;
His little sister weeping walk'd
The greenwood path to meet her brother:
They sought him east, they sought him west,
They sought him all the forest thorough;
They only saw the cloud of night,
They only heard the roar of Yarrow.

"No longer from thy window look,
Thou hast no son, thou tender mother!
No longer walk, thou lovely maid,
Alas, thou hast no more a brother!
No longer seek him east or west,
And search no more the forest thorough;
For, wandering in the night so dark,
He fell a lifeless corse in Yarrow.

"The tear shall never leave my cheek,
No other youth shall be my marrow;
I'll seek thy body in the stream,
And then with thee I'll sleep in Yarrow."
The tear did never leave her cheek,
No other youth became her marrow;
She found his body in the stream,
And now with him she sleeps in Yarrow.

THE "Boy of Bristol," as he has been often called, in allusion to his early genius and career, was born in that town, November 20th, 1752. At the age of five he was sent to school, but after continuing there for a short time he was sent back to his mother, as an unpromising child, of whose proficiency there was no hope. The mother, however, assumed to herself the task of opening the faculties of her boy, and with such success, that he soon learned to read. In his eighth year he was admitted into Colston's Charity School, where he spent several years, and showed an early predilection for poetry, by the composition of several pieces. Having devoted himself to the study of black letter, and tried his powers in imitating the most ancient of the English poets, the smoke-dried and blackened parchment, upon which the verses were written, made the poem be received with delight, as a *bona fide* ancient production—upon which he resolved to raise the public interest by a series of similar deceptions; and, accordingly, he produced, at several instalments, the manuscript works of Rowley, a priest of the fifteenth century, which he pretended had been found in an old chest among the archives of Bristol Cathedral. The literary world hailed the discovery with delight, as the deception was heightened by the youth and boyish appearance of Chatterton; but after the excitement had subsided, the lynx-eyed inspection of critics and antiquarians detected and exposed the imposture. Thus his hopes of rising in the literary world were blasted, and the result of his shame and disappointment, added to all the miseries of poverty, was suicide, which he committed on the 24th of August, 1770, when only seventeen years old.

THE ADVICE.

ADDRESSED TO MISS M— R—, OF BRISTOL.

Revolving in their destined sphere,
The hours begin another year
As rapidly to fly;
Ah! think, Maria (e'er in grey
Those auburn tresses fade away),
So youth and beauty die.

Though now the captivated throng
Adore with flattery and song,
And all before you bow;
Whilst unattentive to the strain,
You hear the humble Muse complain,
Or wreath your frowning brow.

Though poor Pitholeon's feeble line,
In opposition to the Nine,
Still violates your name;
Though tales of passion meanly told,
As dull as Cumberland, as cold,
Strive to confess a flame:

Yet when that bloom and dancing fire,
In silver'd reverence shall expire,
Aged, wrinkled, and defaced;
To keep one lover's flame alive,
Requires the genius of a Clive,
With Walpole's mental taste.

Though rapture wantons in your air,
Though beyond simile you 're fair;
Free, affable, serene:
Yet still one attribute divine
Should in your composition shine—
Sincerity, I mean.

Though numerous swains before you fall,
'Tis empty admiration all,
'Tis all that you require:
How momentary are their chains!
Like you, how insincere the strains
Of those, who but admire!

Accept, for once, advice from me,
And let the eye of censure see
Maria can be true:
No more from fools or empty beaux,
Heaven's representatives disclose,
Or butterflies pursue.

Fly to your worthiest lover's arms,
To him resign your swelling charms,
And meet his generous breast:
Or if Pitholeon suits your taste,
His Muse, with tatter'd fragments graced,
Shall read your cares to rest.

FROM THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

O Chryste, it is a grief for me to telle,
How manie a noble erle and valrous knyghte
In fyghtynge for Kynge Harrold noblie fell,
Al sleynge in Hastyngs feeld in bloudie fyghte.
O sea-o'erteeming Dover! han thy floude,
Han anie fructuous entendement,
Thou wouldst have rose and sank wyth tydes of bloude,
Before Duke Wyllyam's knyghts han hither went;

Whose cowart arrows manie erles sleyne,
And brued the feeld wythe bloude as season rayne.

And of his knyghtes did eke full manie die,
All passyng hie, of mickle myghte echone,
Whose poygnante arrowes, typp'd with destynie,
Caused many wydowes to make myckle mone.
Lordynges, avaunt, that chycken-harted are,
From oute of hearynge quicklie now departe;
Full well I wote, to synge of bloudie warre
Will greeve your tenderlie and mayden harte.
Go do the weaklie womman inn man's geare,
And scond your mansion if grymm war come there.

Soone as the erlie maten belle was tolde,
And sonne was come to byd us all good daie,
Both armies on the feeld, both brave and bolde,
Prepared for fyghte in champyon arraie.
As when two bulles, destynde for Hocktide fyghte
Are yoked bie the necke within a sparre,
Theie rend the erthe, and travellers affryghte,
Lackynge to gage the sportive bloudie warre;
Soe lacked Harroldes menne to come to blowes,
The Normans lacked for to wielde their bowes.

Kynge Harrolde turnynge to his leegemen spake:
My merriemen, be not caste downe in mynde;
Your onlie lode for ay to mar or make,
Before yon sunne has donde his welke you'll fynde
Your lovyng wife, who erst dyd rid the londe
Of Lurdanes, and the treasure that you han,
Wyll falle into the Normanne robber's honde,
Unlesse wyth honde and harte you plaie the manne.
Cheer up your hartes, chase sorrow farre awaie,
Godde and Seyncte Cuthbert be the worde to daie.

And thenne Duke Wyllyam to his knightes did saie:
My merrie menne, be bravelie everiche;
Gif I do gayn the honore of the daie,
Ech one of you I will make myckle riche.
Beer you in mynde, we for a kyngdomm fyghte;
Lordshippes and honores echone shall possesse;
Be this the worde to daie, God and my ryghte;
No doubte but God wylle our true cause blesse.
The clarions then sounded sharpe and shrille;
Deathdoeynge blades were out intent to kille.

THE mournful history of this highly-gifted Scottish poet exhibits in the strongest light the worst results of improvident and unpatronized genius. He was born at Edinburgh, on the 5th of September, 1750. After having been educated at the grammar schools of Edinburgh and Dundee, he obtained a busary at the University of St. Andrew's, with the view of studying for the church. But his mercurial spirit became impatient of the restraint which the preparation for such an office demanded, and before he had entered upon the study of theology, he forsook the College, although he had neither prospects nor resources. At length he was employed in the Sheriff-Clerk's office as a copyist; but the study of poetry, and, it is melancholy to add, the attractions of dissipation, unfitted him for rising above his humble occupation. His excesses grew upon him, until he felt as if deliverance from their thraldom were impossible; while his religious principles, which had been checked, not destroyed, resumed their power to warn, denounce, and terrify, when they could no longer reclaim. His reason, shattered by disease, melancholy, and horror, was destroyed in the conflict, so that it was necessary to confine him in a madhouse, where he died on the 16th of October, 1774. Fergusson would have divided the palm of Scottish poetry with Ramsay, had not a greater than either succeeded, with whom all rivalry was hopeless.

LEITH RACES.

In July month, ae bonny morn,
  Whan Nature's rokely green
Was spread o'er ilka rig o' corn
  To charm our roving een;
Glouring about I saw a quean,
  The fairest 'neath the lift;
Her een were o' the siller sheen,
  Her skin like snawy drift
    Sae white that day.

Quoth she, "I ferlie unco sair,
  That ye sud musan' gae,
Ye wha hae sung o' Hallow-fair,
  Her winter pranks and play;
Whan on Leith-sands the racers rare,
  Wi' jockey louns are met,
Their orra pennies there to ware,
  And drown themsel's in debt
    Fu' deep that day."

An' wha are ye, my winsome dear,
  That taks the gate sae early?
Whare do ye win, gin ane may spier;
  For I right meikle ferly,

That sic braw buskit laughing lass
Thir bonnie blinks should gie,
An' loup like Hebe o'er the grass,
As wanton and as free
Frae dule this day?

"I dwall among the caller springs
That weet the Land o' Cakes,
And aften tune my canty strings
At bridals and lyke-wakes.
They ca' me Mirth; I ne'er was ken'd
To grumble or look sour,
But blythe wad be a lift to lend,
Gin ye wad sey my power
An' pith this day."

A bargain be 't, and, by my fegs,
Gif ye will be my mate,
Wi' you I'll screw the cherry pegs;
Ye shanna find me blate;
We 'll reel and ramble through the sands,
An' jeer wi' a' we meet;
Nor hip the daft an' gleesome bands
That fill Edina's street
Sae thrang this day.

Ere servant maids had wont to rise
To seethe the breakfast kettle,
Ilk dame her brawest ribbons tries,
To put her on her mettle,
Wi' wiles some silly chiel to trap
(An' troth he 's fain to get her);
But she 'll craw kniefly in his crap,
Whan, wow! he canna flit her
Frae hame that day.

Now mony a sca'd and bare-breek'd loun
Rise early to their wark,
Eneugh to fley a muckle town
Wi' dinsome squeel an' bark:
"Here is the true an' faithfu' list
O noblemen an' horses;
Their eild, their weight, their height, their grist,
That rin for plates or purses
Fu' fleet this day."

To whisky plooks that brunt for ouks,
On town-guard soldiers' faces,
Their barber bauld his whittle crooks
An' scrapes them for the races:
Their stumps erst used to philibegs,
Are dight in spatterdashes,
Whase barken'd hides scarce fend their legs
Frae weet an' weary plashes
O' dirt that day.

"Come, hafe a care," the captain cries,
"On guns your bagnets thraw;
Now mind your manual exercise,
And march down raw by raw."
And as they march, he 'll glowr about,
Tent a' their cuts and scars;
'Mang them full mony a gausy snout
Has gusht in birth-day wars,
Wi' blude that day.

Her nainsel maun be carefu' now,
Nor maun she be misleard,
Sin baxter lads hae seal'd a vow
To skelp an' clout the guard;
I'm sure Auld Reekie kens o' nane
That would be sorry at it,
Tho' they should dearly pay the kane,
An' get their tails weel sautit
An' sair thir days.

The tinkler billies i' the Bow
Are now less eident clinking;
As lang's their pith or siller dow,
They 're daffing and they 're drinking.
Bedown Leith-walk what bourocks reel
O' ilka trade and station,
That gar their wives an' childer feel
Toom wames for their libation
O' drink thir days,

* * * * * * *

The Buchan bodies through the beech
Their bunch o' Findrums cry,
An' skirl out bauld in Norland speech,
"Guid speldings! fa' will buy?"

An', by my saul, they 're nae wrang gear
To gust a stirra's mow;
Weel staw'd wi' them he'll never spier
The price o' being fou
Wi' drink that day.

Now wily wights at rowly powl,
An' flingin' o' the dice,
Here break the banes o' mony a soul,
Wi' fa's upo' the ice:
At first the gate seems fair an' straught,
Sae they haud fairly till her;
But wow! in spite o' a' their maught,
They 're rookit o' their siller
An' gowd that day.

* * * * * * *

To town-guard drum, of clangour clear,
Baith men and steeds are rangit:
Some liveries red or yellow wear,
And some are tartan spraingit;
And now the red, the blue e'en now,
Bids fairest for the market;
But, ere the sport be done, I trow
Their skins are gayly yarkit
And peel'd thir days.

Siclike in Pantheon debates,
Whan twa chiels hae a pingle;
E'en now some coulie gets his aits,
An' dirt wi' words they mingle;
Till up loups he wi' diction fu',
There 's lang and dreich contesting;
For now they 're near the point in view,
Now ten miles frae the question
In hand that night.

The races o'er, they hale the dools
Wi' drink o' a' kin-kind;
Great feck gae hirpling hame like fools,
The cripple lead the blind.
May ne'er the canker o' the drink
E'er mak our spirits thrawart,
'Case we git wherewitha' to wink
Wi' een as blue 's a blawart
Wi' straiks thir days!

FROM CALLER WATER.

My muse will no gae far frae hame,
Or scour a' airts to hound for fame;
In troth the jillet ye might blame
For thinking on't,
When eithly she can find the theme
Of *aqua font.*

This is the name that doctors use
Their patients' noddles to confuse;
Wi simples clad in terms abstruse
They labour still,
In kittle words to gar ye roose
Their want o' skill.

But we 'll hae nae sic clitter-clatter,
And briefly to expound the matter,
It shall be ca'd guid Caller Water,
Than whilk I trow,
Few drugs in doctors' shops are better
For me or you.

Tho' joints be stiff as ony rung,
Your pith wi' pain be sairly dung,
Be you in Caller Water flung
Out o'er the lugs,
'T will mak ye supple, swack, and young,
Withouten drugs.

Though colic or the heart-scad teaze us,
Or any inward dwam should seize us,
It masters a' sic fell diseases,
That would ye spulzie,
And brings them to a cannie crisis
Wi' little tulzie.

Wer't na for it the bonnie lasses
Would glow'r nae mair in keeking glasses,
And soon tine dint o' a' the graces
That aft conveen
In gleefu' looks and bonnie faces,
To catch our een.

The fairest then might die a maid,
And Cupid quit his shooting trade,
For wha through clarty masquerade
Could then discover,
Whether the features under shade
Were worth a lover?

This amiable and popular poet was the second son of Spenser Cowper, a younger brother of Lord-Chancellor Cowper, and was born at Berkhamstead, on the 26th of November, 1731. From infancy he had a delicate and extremely susceptible constitution,—a misfortune that was aggravated by the loss of an affectionate mother, who died when he was only six years old. The intense love with which he cherished her memory during the rest of his life, may be surmised from that affecting poem which he wrote on contemplating her picture. His early education was interrupted by a complaint in his eyes, to which he was more or less subject during the rest of his life. At Westminster School, where he continued till the age of eighteen, his natural melancholy and timidity seem to have been confirmed by that despotic tyranny of the elder over the younger boys which constitutes the shame and disgrace of our English seminaries. After leaving school, he spent three years in an attorney's office, and then entered the Temple; but the study of poetry, and the acquaintanceship of Churchill, Thornton, Lloyd, Colman, and other eminent wits of the day, had more attractions for him than Coke upon Lyttleton. He entered public life, therefore, unfitted for its business; and in his thirty-fourth year, on being nominated to the offices of Reading Clerk and Clerk of the Private Committees of the House of Lords, he was so overwhelmed with the idea of reading in public, that he resigned the appointment. His friends then procured for him the office of Clerk of the Journals to the House of Lords, in the idea that his personal appearance in the House would not be required: but a parliamentary dispute on one occasion making his presence necessary, he prepared with such intense application for the effort, that he was prostrated by the struggle, so that when the time arrived he was unfit to attend. It was now obvious to every one that he must retire into private life, and even into partial medical confinement, in consequence of the shock which his reason had sustained, and he was accordingly placed for several months under the care of Dr. Cotton, at St. Alban's.

It is pleasing to think that, on the recovery of this amiable and gentle being, he was so fortunate as to find those friends who could best succeed in soothing his melancholy and directing his genius. These were—the family of the Unwins, the Rev. Mr. Newton of Olney, the philanthropic Thornton, and, subsequently, Lady Austen, widow of Sir Robert Austen, a lady of refined taste and great accomplishments. In this delightful circle, within which he was domesticated, Cowper enjoyed as much happiness as so strange a peculiarity of temperament would permit.

The life of Cowper as a poet is soon told. Although he had written occasional pieces anonymously in the Connoisseur, his public appearance as an author, did not commence until he had reached the age of fifty. In 1782, at the urgent request of Mr. Unwin, he published a volume of poems, containing Table Talk, &c.; but they were of too sturdy a character to be suddenly appreciated, so that the progress of the work to celebrity was very slow. His principal poem, The Task, was composed at the suggestion of Lady Austen, and published in 1784; after this he commenced his Tirocinium, which, with several minor pieces, he published in the following year. His poetical reputation was now established. Having been for some years employed in a Translation of Homer into blank verse, he published it in 1791. Fortunately for himself and the world, he had been persuaded that intellectual activity was necessary for his health, both of body and mind, and on this account he persevered for so many years in authorship, and produced so many poems of such high and varied excellence. We may mention, as a curious literary fact, that John Gilpin, the most humorous poem in the English language, was composed by this the most melancholy of our poets; and such was his conscientiousness, that after he had written it, he feared he had committed a grievous sin. The malady which had been so long retarded was to prevail at last; and after an illness in which physical decay was accelerated and embittered by mental gloom and aberration, he died on the 25th of April, 1800.



C.Heath

'ER.

THE SOLEMN COXCOMB.

A graver coxcomb we may sometimes see,
Quite as absurd, though not so light, as he:
A shallow brain behind a serious mask,
An oracle within an empty cask,
The solemn fop; significant and budge;
A fool with judges, amongst fools a judge;
He says but little, and that little said
Owes all its weight, like loaded dice, to lead.
His wit invites you by his looks to come,
But when you knock, it never is at home.
'Tis like a parcel sent you by the stage,
Some handsome present, as your hopes presage;
'Tis heavy, bulky, and bids fair to prove
An absent friend's fidelity and love:
But when unpack'd, your disappointment groans
To find it stuff'd with brickbats, earth, and stones.

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H. Corbould. C. Heath.

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From Conversation.

FROM VERSES ON THE RECEIPT OF HIS MOTHER'S PICTURE.

My mother! when I learn'd that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hover'd thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unfelt, a kiss:
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
Ah, that maternal smile! It answers—Yes.
I heard the bell toll'd on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such?—It was.—Where thou art gone,
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more!
Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.
What ardently I wish'd I long believed,
And, disappointed still, was still deceived.
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of to-morrow even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,
I learn'd at last submission to my lot:
But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.
Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;
And where the gardener, Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapp'd
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet cap,
'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we call'd the pastoral house our own.
Short-lived possession! but the record fair,
That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm, that has effaced
A thousand other themes less deeply traced.
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou might'st know me safe and warmly laid;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit, or confectionary plum;
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestow'd
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glow'd;

*

All this, and, more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughen'd by those cataracts and breaks,
That humour interposed too often makes;
All this still legible in memory's page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honours to thee as my numbers may;
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorn'd in heaven, though little noticed here.

ON CORPORATIONS.

Man in society is like a flower
Blown in its native bed; 'tis there alone
His faculties, expanded in full bloom,
Shine out; there only reach their proper use.
But man associated and leagued with man
By regal warrant, or self-join'd by bond
For interest-sake, or swarming into clans
Beneath one head, for purposes of war,
Like flowers selected from the rest, and bound
And bundled close to fill some crowded vase,
Fades rapidly, and, by compression marr'd,
Contracts defilement not to be endured.
Hence charter'd boroughs are such public plagues;
And burghers, men immaculate perhaps
In all their private functions, once combined,
Become a loathsome body, only fit
For dissolution, hurtful to the main.
Hence merchants, unimpeachable of sin
Against the charities of domestic life,
Incorporated, seem at once to lose
Their nature; and, disclaiming all regard
For mercy and the common rights of man,
Build factories with blood, conducting trade
At the sword's point, and dyeing the white robe
Of innocent commercial Justice red.
Hence too the field of glory, as the world
Misdeems it, dazzled by its bright array,
With all its majesty of thundering pomp,
Enchanting music, and immortal wreaths,
Is but a school, where thoughtlessness is taught
On principle, where foppery atones
For folly, gallantry for every vice.

THE MISERIES OF KINGS.

I pity kings, whom Worship waits upon
Obsequious from the cradle to the throne;
Before whose infant eyes the flatterer bows,
And binds a wreath about their baby brows;
Whom education stiffens into state,
And death awakens from that dream too late.
Oh! if Servility, with supple knees,
Whose trade it is to smile, to crouch, to please;
If smooth Dissimulation, skill'd to grace
A devil's purpose with an angel's face;
If smiling peeresses, and simpering peers,
Encompassing his throne a few short years;
If the gilt carriage and the pamper'd steed,
That wants no driving and disdains the lead;
If guards, mechanically form'd in ranks,
Playing, at beat of drum, their martial pranks,
Shouldering and standing as if struck to stone,
While condescending majesty looks on!—
If monarchy consist in such base things,
Sighing, I say again, I pity kings!
To be suspected, thwarted, and withstood,
E'en when he labours for his country's good;
To see a band, call'd patriot, for no cause
But that they catch at popular applause,
Careless of all th' anxiety he feels,
Hook disappointment on the public wheels;
With all their flippant fluency of tongue,
Most confident, when palpably most wrong;—
If this be kingly, then farewell for me
All kingship; and may I be poor and free!
To be the Table Talk of clubs up-stairs,
To which th' unwash'd artificer repairs,
To indulge his genius after long fatigue,
By diving into cabinet intrigue
(For what kings deem a toil, as well they may,
To him is relaxation and mere play);
To win no praise when well-wrought plans prevail,
But to be rudely censured when they fail;
To doubt the love his favourites may pretend,
And in reality to find no friend;
If he indulge a cultivated taste,
His galleries with the works of art well graced,
To hear it call'd extravagance and waste;

If these attendants, and if such as these,
Must follow royalty, then welcome ease;
However humble and confined the sphere,
Happy the state that has not these to fear.

From Table Talk.

THE SANCTIMONIOUS OLD PRUDE.

Yon ancient prude, whose wither'd features show
She might be young some forty years ago,
Her elbows pinion'd close upon her hips,
Her head erect, her fan upon her lips,
Her eye-brows arch'd, her eyes both gone astray
To watch yon amorous couple in their play,
With bony and unkerchief'd neck defies
The rude inclemency of wintry skies,
And sails with lappet-head, and mincing airs
Duly at clink of bell to morning prayers.
To thrift and parsimony much inclined,
She yet allows herself that boy behind;
The shivering urchin, bending as he goes,
With slipshod heels and dewdrop at his nose;
His predecessor's coat advanced to wear,
Which future pages yet are doom'd to share,
Carries her Bible tuck'd beneath his arm,
And hides his hands to keep his fingers warm.
She, half an angel in her own account,
Doubts not hereafter with the saints to mount;
Though not a grace appears on strictest search,
But that she fasts, and, *item*, goes to church.
Conscious of age, she recollects her youth,
And tells, not always with an eye to truth,
Who spann'd her waist, and who, where'er he came,
Scrawl'd upon glass Miss Bridget's lovely name;
Who stole her slipper, fill'd it with tokay,
And drank the little bumper every day.
Of temper as envenom'd as an asp,
Censorious, and her every word a wasp;
In faithful memory she records the crimes,
Or real, or fictitious, of the times;
Laughs at the reputations she has torn,
And holds them dangling at arm's length in scorn.

From Truth.

A THEOLOGICAL SOIREE.

Adieu, Vinosa cries, ere yet he sips
The purple bumper, trembling at his lips,
Adieu to all morality! if grace
Make works a vain ingredient in the case.
The Christian hope is—Waiter, draw the cork—
If I mistake not—Blockhead! with a fork!—
Without good works, whatever some may boast,
Mere folly and delusion—Sir, your toast.—
My firm persuasion is, at least sometimes,
That Heaven will weigh man's virtues and his crimes
With nice attention, in a righteous scale,
And save or damn as these or those prevail.
I plant my foot upon this ground of trust,
And silence every fear with—God is just.
But if perchance on some dull drizzling day
A thought intrude, that says, or seems to say,
If thus th' important cause is to be tried,
Suppose the beam should dip on the wrong side;
I soon recover from these needless frights,
And, God is merciful—sets all to rights.
Thus between justice, as my prime support,
And mercy, fled to as the last resort,
I glide and steal along with heaven in view,
And,—pardon me, the bottle stands with you.
I never will believe, the Colonel cries,
The sanguinary schemes that some devise,
Who make the good Creator on their plan
A being of less equity than man.
If appetite, or what divines call lust,
Which men comply with, e'en because they must,
Be punish'd with perdition, who is pure?
Then theirs, no doubt, as well as mine is sure.
If sentence of eternal pain belong
To every sudden slip and transient wrong,
Then Heaven enjoins the fallible and frail
A hopeless task, and damns them if they fail.
My creed (whatever some creed-makers mean
By Athanasian nonsense, or Nicene)—
My creed is, he is safe that does his best,
And death's a doom sufficient for the rest.
Right, says an Ensign; and, for aught I see,
Your faith and mine substantially agree;
The best of every man's performance here
Is to discharge the duties of his sphere.

A lawyer's dealings should be just and fair,
Honesty shines with great advantage there.
Fasting and prayer sit well upon a priest,
A decent caution and reserve at least.
A soldier's best is courage in the field,
With nothing here that wants to be conceal'd;
Manly deportment, gallant, easy, gay!
A hand as liberal as the light of day.
The soldier thus endow'd, who never shrinks,
Nor closets up his thoughts, whate'er he thinks;
Who scorns to do an injury by stealth,
Must go to heaven—and I must drink his health.
Sir Smug, he cries (for lowest at the board,
Just made fifth chaplain of his patron lord,
His shoulders witnessing, by many a shrug,
How much his feelings suffer'd, sat Sir Smug),
Your office is to winnow false from true;
Come, prophet, drink, and tell us what think you?
Sighing and smiling as he takes his glass,
Which they that woo preferment rarely pass;
Fallible man, the church-bred youth replies,
Is still found fallible, however wise
And differing judgments serve but to declare,
That truth lies somewhere, if we knew but where.
Of all it ever was my lot to read,
Of critics now alive, or long since dead,
The book of all the world that charm'd me most
Was,—well-a-day, the title-page was lost;
The writer well remarks, A heart that knows
To take with gratitude what Heaven bestows,
With prudence always ready at our call,
To guide our use of it, is all in all.
Doubtless it is.—To which, of my own store,
I superadd a few essentials more;
But these, excuse the liberty I take,
I waive just now, for conversation's sake.—
Spoke like an oracle, they all exclaim,
And add Right Reverend to Smug's honour'd name.
And yet our lot is given us in a land,
Where busy arts are never at a stand;
Where Science points her telescopic eye,
Familiar with the wonders of the sky;
Where bold Inquiry diving out of sight,
Brings many a precious pearl of truth to light;
Where nought eludes the persevering quest
That fashion, taste, or luxury suggest.

From Hope.

THIS lowly born and humbly nurtured peasant, of whom a land famous for producing distinguished men is especially and justly proud, was born on the 29th of January, 1759, in the neighbourhood of the town of Ayr, North Britain. His father was not only a poor but an unfortunate and rack-rented peasant, so that the poet, whose fame was to fill the world, could with difficulty acquire that measure of education which in Scotland can be procured for the poorest of its population. He learned indeed to read and write, and cast accounts, but in the midst of interruptions, and at the expense of many a sacrifice; and to these acquirements he afterwards added some knowledge of Mensuration, and a smattering of Latin and French. But, like Shakspeare, he studied the volume of Nature, and there learned those invaluable lessons which books cannot impart; and while he thus imbibed the poetical spirit, he unconsciously taught himself Ethics, Logic, and Metaphysics, by his debates and discussions with his fellow peasantry, among whom the investigation of those profound subjects, which in other countries are confined only to the erudite, constitute a favourite and habitual exercise. It was thus that he learned more than is "dreamt of" in the philosophy of colleges, and was fitted to astonish and delight the world as an unsophisticated poet of nature, and to give utterance to its purest and most genuine emotions.

When he had reached his sixteenth year, Burns commenced his first efforts in rhyme; and having made the delightful discovery that he could compose verses, he continued to produce poems in rapid succession, always studying in the mean time to improve upon each production, and perfecting himself in a system of self-taught criticism, by which he tested his own labours. In this manner, while holding the plough, and engaged in the toils of husbandry, he was fitting himself for the glorious vocation of a great national poet. But poverty and misfortune still continued to oppress him so heavily, that he had resolved to leave his native country, and try his fortune in Jamaica; and as funds were necessary for such an adventure, he published a volume of Poems, from which he derived as much as would defray the expenses of his passage. The day of sailing was at hand, and he had taken a final adieu of all he loved, when a letter from Dr. Blacklock to one of the friends of Burns completely altered his resolutions, for it stated what success might await the poet if he tried the northern capital. Burns immediately acted upon the hint, and, on his arrival in Edinburgh, the talented and influential courted the society of the high-minded, heaven-inspired ploughman. A second edition of his Poems realized for him a sum which enabled him to relieve the distresses of his mother's family and his own, and commence farming upon a small scale. But agricultural speculations did not prosper in his hands, and he was reduced to apply to his influential admirers for some situation under Government, from which he might derive a moderate subsistence. And what situation did they procure for one whose works had yielded them such pure and elevated gratification? Such a one as would have been scarcely worthy of a superannuated gamekeeper or lackey. It was that of an exciseman—a gauger—an office peculiarly odious at that time in Scotland, with a salary of some fifty pounds a year which was subsequently increased to seventy.

Burns had been guilty of occasional excesses among the society into which he was often thrown in Edinburgh; but these unfortunately became more frequent in his new situation, until the fatal habit of drinking became more and more confirmed. And yet, there is reason to think that these aberrations have been grossly over-stated to the public; for no complaint could be made that he neglected his public duties. His poems, which he still continued to produce, exhibited all the strength and freshness of his former days; and although his salary was so small, he left no debts behind him; while such was his noble disinterestedness, that he sternly refused to receive any pecuniary remuneration for those exquisite songs which he furnished for Thomson's National Miscellany. He died on the 21st of July, 1796. It is enough to say of his poems, that they will endure as long as the scenery of that beautiful and romantic land which he celebrated so eloquently, and loved so well.



BURNS.

BRUCE'S ADDRESS TO HIS ARMY BEFORE THE BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN.

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled;
Scots, wham Bruce has often led;
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victorie.

Now's the day, and now's the hour;
See the front o' battle lour;
See approach proud Edward's power—
Chains and slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee!

Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strangly draw,
Free-man stand, or free-man fa'?
Let him follow me!

By oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!

Lay the proud usurper low!
Tyrants fall in ever foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Let us do, or die!

COMFORTS OF THE POOR.

They're nae sae wretched 's ane wad think,
Tho' constantly on poortith's brink;
They're sae accustom'd wi' the sight,
The view o't gies them little fright.
Then chance an' fortune are sae guided,
They're ay in less or mair provided;
An' tho' fatigued wi' close employment,
A blink o' rest's a sweet enjoyment.
The dearest comfort o' their lives,
Their grusbie weans an' faithfu' wives;
The prattling things are just their pride,
That sweetens a' their fire-side.
An' whyles twalpennie-worth o' nappie
Can mak the bodies unco happy;
They lay aside their private cares,
To mind the kirk and state affairs;
They'll talk o' patronage and priests,
Wi' kindling fury in their breasts,
Or tell what new taxation's comin',
An' ferlie at the folk in Lon'on.
As bleak-faced Hallowmas returns,
They get the jovial, rantin' kirns,
When rural life o' every station,
Unite in common recreation:
Love blinks, wit slaps, and social mirth,
Forgets there's care upon' the earth.
That merry day the year begins,
They bar the door on frosty winds;
The nappie reeks wi' mantling ream,
And sheds a heart inspiring steam;
The luntin' pipe, and sneeshin' mill,
Are handed round wi' right guid will;
The cantie auld folks cracking crouse,
The young anes ranting thro' the house—
My heart has been sae fain to see them,
That I for joy hae barkit wi' them.

*

Still it's owre true that ye hae said,
Sic game is now owre aften play'd.
There 's monie a creditable stock
O' decent, honest, fawsont folk,
Are riven out baith root and branch,
Some rascal's pridefu' greed to quench,
Wha thinks to knit himsel the faster
In favour wi' some gentle master,
Wha, aiblins, thrang a-parliamentin',
For Britain's guid his saul indentin'.

From The Twa Dogs.

TAM O'SHANTER AND THE WITCHES.

But here my Muse her wing maun cow'r;
Sic flights are far beyond her pow'r;
To sing how Nannie lap and flang
(A souple jad she was and strang),
And how Tam stood, like ane bewitch'd,
And thought his very een enrich'd;
Ev'n Satan glow'r'd, and fidg'd fu' fain,
And hotch'd and blew wi' might and main:
Till first ae caper, syne anither,
Tam tint his reason a' thegither,
And roars out, "Weel done, Cutty-sark!"
And in an instant a' was dark!
And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,
When out the hellish legion sallied.
As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke,
When plundering herds assail their byke;
As open pussie's mortal foes,
When, pop! she starts before their nose;
As eager runs the market crowd,
When "Catch the thief!" resounds aloud;
So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
Wi' monie an eldritch skreech and hollow.
Ah, Tam! ah, Tam! thou 'll get thy fairin'!
In hell they 'll roast thee like a herrin'!
In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin'!
Kate soon will be a wofu' woman!
Now, do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
And win the key-stane of the brig:
There at them thou thy tail may toss,
A running stream they dare na cross.
But ere the key-stane she could make,
The fient a tail she had to shake;

For Nannie, far before the rest,
Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;
But little wist she Maggie's mettle—
Ae spring brought aff her master hale,
But left behind her ain grey tail:
The carlin claught her by the rump,
And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.

From Tam O'Shanter

MEETING WITH DEATH.

The clachan yill had made me canty,
I was na fou, but just had plenty;
I stacher'd whyles, but yet took tent ay
To free the ditches,
An' hillocks, stanes, and bushes kenn'd ay
Frae ghaists and witches.

The rising moon began to glow'r
The distant Cumnock hills out-owre;
To count her horns wi' a' my pow'r,
I set mysel;
But whether she had three or four,
I cou'd na tell.

I was come round about the hill,
And todlin' down on Willie's mill,
Setting my staff wi' a' my skill,
To keep me sicker;
Tho' leeward whyles, against my will,
I took a bicker.

I there wi' *something* did forgather
That put me in an eerie swither;
An awfu' scythe out-owre ae shouther,
Clear, dangling hang;
A three-taed leister on the ither
Lay, large an' lang.

Its stature seem'd lang Scotch ells twa,
The queerest shape that e'er I saw,
For fient a wame it had ava!
And then, its shanks,
They were as thin, as sharp, an' sma',
As cheeks o' branks!

"Guid-e'en," quo' I; "Friend! hae ye been mawin
When ither folk are busy sawin'?"
It seem'd to mak a kind o' stan',
But naething spak;
At length, says I, "Friend, whare ye gaun,
Will ye go back?"

It spak right howe—"My name is Death,
But be na fley'd."—Quoth I, "Guid faith!
Ye 're maybe come to stap my breath;
But tent me, billie;
I red ye weel, tak care o' scaith,
See there 's a gully!"

"Gudeman," quo' he, "put up your whittle,
I 'm no design'd to try its metal;
But if I did, I wad be kittle
To be mislear'd;
I wad na mind it, no that spittle
Out-owre my beard."

"Weel, weel!" says I, "a bargain be 't;
Come, gie 's your hand, an' sae we 're gree't;
We 'll ease our shanks an' tak a seat,
Come, gie 's your news;
This while ye hae been monie a gate,
At monie a house."

From Death and Dr. Hornbook.

A HALLOWEEN SUPERSTITION.

Then up gat fechtin Jamie Fleck,
An' he swoor by his conscience,
That he could saw hemp-seed a peck;
For it was a' but nonsense:
The auld guidman raught down the pock,
An' out a handfu' gied him;
Syne bade him slip frae 'mang the folk,
Some time when nae ane see'd him,
An' try 't that night.

He marches thro' amang the stacks,
Tho' he was something sturtin;
The graip he for a harrow taks,
An' haurls at his curpin:

An' ev'ry now an' then, he says,
" Hemp-seed I saw thee,
An' her that is to be my lass,
Come after me, and draw thee
As fast this night."

He whistled up Lord Lennox march,
To keep his courage cheery ;
Altho' his hair began to arch,
He was sae fley'd an' eerie ;
Till presently he hears a squeak,
An' then a grane an' gruntle ;
He by his shouther gae a keek,
An' tumbled wi' a wintle
Out-owre that night,

He roar d a horrid murder-shout,
In dreadfu' desperation !
An' young an' auld cam rinning out,
An' hear the sad narration :
He swoor 'twas hilchin' Jean M'Craw,
Or crouchie Merran Humphie,
'Till stop ! she trotted thro' them a' ;
An' wha was it but *grumphie*
Asteer that night !

ODE

ON THE BIRTH-DAY OF PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD.

False flatterer, Hope away !
Nor think to lure us as in days of yore ;
We solemnize this sorrowing natal day,
To prove our loyal truth—we can no more ;
And, owning Heaven's mysterious sway,
Submissive, low, adore.
Ye honour'd mighty dead !
Who nobly perish'd in the glorious cause,
Your King, your country, and her laws !
From great Dundee, who smiling victory led,
And fell a martyr in her arms,
(What breast of northern ice but warms ?)

To bold Balmerino's undying name,
Whose soul of fire lighted at heaven's high flame,
Deserves the proudest wreath departed heroes claim.

Not unreveng'd your fate shall be,
It only lags the fatal hour;
Your blood shall with incessant cry
Awake at last th' unspairing power.
As from the cliff, with thund'ring course,
The snowy ruin smokes along
With doubling speed and gathering force,
Till deep it crashing whelms the cottage in the vale;
So vengeance * * *

HIGHLAND MARY.

Ye banks, and braes, and streams, around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There simmer first unfald her robes,
And there the langest tarry
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloom'd the gay green birk!
How rich the hawthorn's blosom!
As underneath their fragrant shades
I clasp'd her to my bosom!
The golden hours, on angel wings,
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me, as light and life,
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' monie a vow and lock'd embrace,
Our parting was fu' tender;
And pledging aft to meet again,
We tore ourselves asunder:
But, oh! fell death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
I aft hae kiss'd sae fondly!
And closed for ay the sparkling glance
That dwelt on me sae kindly!
And mould'ring now, in silent dust,
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

FAREWELL TO NANCY.

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever!
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.
Who shall say that Fortune grieves him,
While the star of hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me;
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy:
But to see her, was to love her;
Love but her, and love for ever.
Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure!
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever!
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

THE BOOK-WORMS.

Written in a splendidly bound, but worm-eaten, copy of Shakspeare, the property of a nobleman.

Through and through the inspired leaves,
Ye maggots, make your windings;
But, oh! respect his lordship's taste,
—And spare his golden bindings.

The author of The Minstrel was born at Laurencekirk, Kincardineshire, North Britain, in 1735, and was educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen, where his uncommon proficiency excited hopes among his friends which were not disappointed. In 1761, he was appointed Professor of Philosophy in the University of Aberdeen, having by this time acquired a literary and poetical reputation; and the able manner in which he filled the chair, enhanced not only his own reputation, but that of the College. In 1770, he published his Essay on Truth, which obtained such popularity, that he received from the University of Oxford the degree of Doctor of Laws, and from the king a pension of two hundred pounds a year. In the same year followed The Minstrel, which established the fame of Beattie as a poet of high order.

With a reputation which had now extended over Europe, and possessed of the esteem of society at large, nothing seemed wanting to complete the happiness of a heart constituted like that of Beattie; but his latter days were so deeply embittered by domestic calamity, as to render every thing else valueless. His wife became deranged, and had to be placed under restraint; his eldest son, a youth of brilliant promise, died at the age of twenty-two, and his second, and only surviving one, of kindred character and talents, died at the age of eighteen. Well might Beattie exclaim at these melancholy bereavements, "I have done with the world!" After this, he lingered on, and performed his duties mechanically, and with a broken heart, until he was relieved by death, in 1803.

THE BOYHOOD OF THE MINSTREL.

There lived in Gothic days, as legends tell,
A shepherd-swain, a man of low degree;
Whose sires, perchance, in Fairyland might dwell,
Sicilian groves, or vales of Arcady;
But he, I ween, was of the north countrie!
A nation famed for song, and beauty's charms;
Zealous, yet modest; innocent, though free;
Patient of toil; serene amidst alarms;
Inflexible in faith; invincible in arms.

The shepherd-swain of whom I mention made
On Scotia's mountains fed his little flock;
The sickle, scythe, or plough, he never sway'd;
An honest heart was almost all his stock;
His drink the living water from the rock;
The milky dams supplied his board, and lent
Their kindly fleece to baffle winter's shock;
And he, though oft with dust and sweat besprent,
Did guide and guard their wanderings, wheresoe'er they went.

From labour health, from health contentment springs;
Contentment opes the source of every joy.
He envied not, he never thought of, kings;
Nor from those appetites sustain'd annoy,

That chance may frustrate, or indulgence cloy;
Nor Fate his calm and humble hopes beguiled;
He mourn'd no recreant friend, nor mistress coy,
For on his vows the blameless Phœbe smiled,
And her alone he loved, and loved her from a child.

No jealousy their dawn of love o'ercast,
Nor blasted were their wedded days with strife;
Each season look'd delightful as it past,
To the fond husband and the faithful wife.
Beyond the lowly vale of shepherd life
They never roam'd; secure beneath the storm
Which in Ambition's lofty land is rife,
Where peace and love are canker'd by the worm
Of pride, each bud of joy industrious to deform.

The wight, whose tale these artless lines unfold,
Was all the offspring of this humble pair:
His birth no oracle or seer foretold;
No prodigy appear'd in earth or air,
Nor aught that might a strange event declare.
You guess each circumstance of Edwin's birth;
The parent's transport, and the parent's care;
The gossip's prayer for wealth, and wit, and worth;
And one long summer-day of indolence and mirth.

And yet poor Edwin was no vulgar boy,
Deep thought oft seem'd to fix his infant eye.
Dainties he heeded not, nor gaude, nor toy,
Save one short pipe of rudest minstrelsy;
Silent when glad; affectionate though shy;
And now his look was most demurely sad;
And now he laugh'd aloud, yet none knew why.
The neighbours stared and sigh'd, yet bless'd the lad:
Some deem'd him wondrous wise, and some believed
him mad.

But why should I his childish feats display?
Concourse, and noise, and toil, he ever fled;
Nor cared to mingle in the clamorous fray
Of squabbling imps; but to the forest sped,
Or roam'd at large the lonely mountain's head;
Or, where the maze of some bewilder'd stream
To deep untrodden groves his footsteps led,
There would he wander wild, till Phœbus' beam,
Shot from the western cliff, released the weary team.

Th' exploit of strength, dexterity, or speed,
To him nor vanity nor joy could bring.
His heart, from cruel sport estranged, would bleed
To work the woe of any living thing,
By trap or net, by arrow or by sling;
These he detested; those he scorn'd to wield;
He wish'd to be the guardian, not the king,
Tyrant far less, or traitor of the field.
And sure the sylvan reign unbloody joy might yield.

Lo! where the stripling, wrapt in wonder, roves
Beneath the precipice o'erhung with pine;
And sees, on high, amidst th' encircling groves,
From cliff to cliff the foaming torrents shine:
While waters, woods, and winds, in concert join,
And Echo swells the chorus to the skies.
Would Edwin this majestic scene resign
For aught the huntsman's puny craft supplies?
Ah! no: he better knows great Nature's charms to prize.

And oft he traced the uplands, to survey
When o'er the sky advanced the kindling dawn,
The crimson cloud, blue main, and mountain grey,
And lake, dim-gleaming on the smoky lawn:
Far to the west the long long vale withdrawn,
Where twilight loves to linger for awhile;
And now he faintly kens the bounding fawn,
And villager abroad at early toil.
But, lo! the Sun appears! and heaven, earth, ocean, smile.

And oft the craggy cliff he loved to climb,
When all in mist the world below was lost.
What dreadful pleasure! there to stand sublime,
Like shipwreck'd mariner on desert coast,
And view th' enormous waste of vapour, tost
In billows, lengthening to the horizon round,
Now scoop'd in gulfs, with mountains now emboss'd!
And hear the voice of mirth and song rebound,
Flocks, herds, and waterfalls, along the hoar profound!

In truth he was a strange and wayward wight,
Fond of each gentle and each dreadful scene.
In darkness, and in storm, he found delight:
Nor less, than when on ocean-wave serene
The southern Sun diffused his dazzling shene.

*

Ev'n sad vicissitude amused his soul:
And if a sigh would sometimes intervene,
And down his cheek a tear of pity roll,
A sigh, a tear, so sweet, he wish'd not to control.

* * * * *

See, in the rear of the warm sunny shower
The visionary boy from shelter fly;
For now the storm of summer rain is o'er,
And cool, and fresh, and fragrant, is the sky.
And, lo! in the dark east, expanded high,
The rainbow brightens to the setting Sun!
Fond fool, that deem'st the streaming glory nigh,
How vain the chase thine ardour has begun!
'Tis fled afar, ere half thy purposed race be run.

* * * * *

Or, when the setting Moon, in crimson dyed,
Hung o'er the dark and melancholy deep,
To haunted stream, remote from man, he hied,
Where fays of yore their revels wont to keep;
And there let Fancy rove at large, till sleep
A vision brought to his entranced sight.
And first, a wildly murmuring wind 'gan creep
Shrill to his ringing ear; then tapers bright,
With instantaneous gleam, illumed the vault of night.



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